WHILE 'TIS MAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A DESPERATE CHARACTER," &c.

CHAPTER X.

My wife had very successfully turned the tables on me; when I had thought to puzzle, if not mystify her, she had puzzled and mystified me with a vengeance: and greater subject-matter for wonder and amazement was in store for me.

"I have been very fortunate, more so even than I anticipated," she presently continued, addressing herself to our young visitor, who looked up into her face with an expression of entire confidence and unbounded gratitude and love. But is it not ever thus! While we, poor male creatures, are fumbling about, thinking and pondering, the finer female instinct decides upon the best course of action to be pursued, and at once puts the project into execution; we plan, she executes almost before she plans, and far seldomer fails, or makes a mistake, than we do; the reflection may not be very flattering to our vanity, but the fact remains nevertheless—"*L'homme propose, mais la femme dispose.*" I was simply nowhere, for what was my paltry loan, which I half regretted as soon as given.

"I have sold it, Jessie," thus my wife, to old Mrs. Joseph's granddaughter.

"Sold what?" I inquired, unable any longer to restrain my curiosity.

"Nothing belonging to you, sir," replied my wife, pleasantly, with an arch smile, as much as to say—"We have been able to do without you, doctor, for once in our lives, at all events."

"Oh! if it is a secret," I returned, "of course I shall not say a word more; still——"

"Still you would like to know all about it," pursued my wife, laughing outright; "well, so you shall, dear."

"No, no," I exclaimed, "I do not wish to hear any of your secrets; keep them to yourself, they are nothing on earth to me; good evening," this, bowing, to Jessie, "I must see about writing my prescriptions."

"Papa," thus my wife, with more of entreaty than authority,

"wait a minute." I could not but obey, and my wife continued: "I have already told you how I came to visit Mrs. Josephs, and I need not tell you, for you know it, in what a sad state I found her—little by little they had parted with everything they possessed, and were reduced to almost the last stage of destitution, and were, worse than all, in the power of that dreadful old man."

"Yes," I interrupted rather impatiently, "I know all that, my dear; and if you have nothing more to tell me, I must really see about——"

"Don't be in such a hurry, papa; you know we women have a roundabout way of telling a story; and if you put us out we have to recommence again at the beginning, and so you are further off than ever from hearing the end of the tale."

"Very good," I replied, with as much resignation as I could force into my tone and manner, "very well; I expect I had better sit down, as you are likely to be some time about it, I suppose."

"Not very long," replied my wife, "if you do not interrupt me. Well, they had parted with everything almost they possessed, and were reduced almost to the last stage of destitution, when what with fatigue, worry, privation, and one thing and another, the poor old lady had that fit for which you were called in to see her."

"I know," I interrupted with increasing impatience, "I know; why repeat what must be distressing to this little girl?"

A slight blush suffused the pale cheeks of the "little girl," who, however, made no remark, and my wife continued:

"One thing, however, I found in rummaging about the place, which they had overlooked, and which was in reality the most valuable of all their possessions—quite a small fortune, in fact."

"I beg your pardon, madam," Jessie interrupted in her turn; "but you cannot tell how I long to know what you have got for it."

"Patience, my dear," replied my wife, patting the girl's head—"you are as bad as the doctor; but I am coming to that."

"What was 'that'?" I inquired, interrupting the narrative once more.

"'That,'" returned my wife, was a blue chiua vase, which Mrs. Josephs gave me to understand had been in the possession of her family for nearly two hundred years. I knew how much such ugly old things were prized by collectors, and I conceived at once the notion of selling it for her. In my simplicity I imagined, and told them so, it might bring five pounds."

"Have you sold it, then?" I asked.

"For how much?" inquired Jessie.

"Guess!" replied my wife, beaming over with smiles and good nature.

"One pound?" guessed Jessie.

"Twenty?" ventured I, knowing, as my wife said, what a price similar articles have occasionally fetched in the market.

"You are nearest the mark, my dear," answered my wife, looking at me, "though you are still a long way off."

"More than twenty pounds!" exclaimed Jessie, turning very pale, and clasping her hands.

"Yes, my dear, much more than twenty pounds: what would you say to one hundred?"

Jessie screamed, "Oh, gran' dear, dear old gran', you are saved, you are saved!" and throwing herself into my wife's arms, buried her face in her bosom and sobbed aloud "How shall I ever repay you for your goodness!"

"I don't want or expect any repayment, my dear," replied my wife, as she kissed the pale face that was looking up at her with an expression of almost worship imprinted on every feature, "I am only too happy to be able to do a good turn to a fellow-creature in distress——"

"That is true, indeed," I interruped once more; and this time with more reason for my interruption than on former occasions.

My wife frowned and shook her head. "No flattery, sir; you know I hate it."

To this proposition, or assertion, I once more assented, but not verbally, for fear of offending the little woman, who really, in a general way, does not permit her left hand to know what her right hand has been doing in the way of charity.

"Who did you sell it to?" I inquired, this time from sheer curiosity.

"Lord Middleton."

"Goodness, gracious! Well, mamma, to use a vulgar expression, you have got a 'cheek'!"

"So I suppose," assented my wife; "but I know his lordship is a collector of such articles; and as he is a connection—distant no doubt—I thought I should prefer going to him, rather than a dealer.

"I am sorry you did, my dear," I returned. "He will think you were selling it on your own account—that we are in difficulties, or——"

"Well, supposing he did, my dear, what does it signify? We are not, and I trust we never shall be."

"Amen! dear. But I cannot help wishing you had sold the vase to any other person."

"I doubt whether anybody else would have given me the same price for it; and, besides, to set your mind at rest, his lordship had not the remotest idea who I was."

"Not know who you were, my dear?"

"Not in the least. It is quite ten years, if not more, since I last saw him to speak to, and ten years make a good deal of difference sometimes.

"Not in you, my love," I exclaimed; "not in you. At least, only to improve you."

"Bah!" laughed my wife, "I sent up word to say, 'A person wished to show him an old china vase,' and I was at once shown into the library. Lord Middleton is very little altered; he may be a trifle stouter, but not much. His troubles do not seem to have made much impression on him, at all events."

"No," I assented, "not outwardly, at least; but, on the other hand, you must remember they were not of very long duration; but go on."

"Well, I showed him the vase, and after he had looked at it, and turned it over in every direction, he went to a cabinet and took out one that seemed the very counterpart of mine – of yours, Jessie, I mean. He placed them side by side, and then turning to me, said, 'How much do you want for your vase, madam?'"

"'My lord,' I said, 'I am quite ignorant of its value, beyond the general idea that it is valuable, and I prefer to leave the price to your lordship.'"

"'In that case, madam,' he replied, 'I offer you what I gave some months since for its companion—one hundred pounds.'"

"I was so surprised," continued my wife, "I could scarce believe my ears, and exclaimed, 'One hundred pounds, your lordship!'"

"'Yes, madam,' he answered; 'one hundred pounds, and not one penny more. Will you take it?'"

"'Oh, my lord! with grateful thanks;' and he wrote out this cheque (producing it) on the spot."

"And now, Jessie," continued my wife, when we had each closely scrutinised the cheque, "what are you going to do, my dear?"

"Dear, good, kind Mrs. De Vere!" exclaimed Jessie, bursting into tears, and warmly kissing my wife, "I think the very first thing to be done is to get out of that horrible place."

"Rhymer's Rents?"

"Yes," with a little shudder.

"I agree with you," I assented.

"So do I," added my wife; and continued, "where do you think of going to?"

"I have no idea," said Jessie. "Could you not add one other kindness to all you have already done for us, and direct me—us, I mean—to some quiet, respectable lodging, where I should be safe from—from—"

"Let me see," said my wife—"to be sure, the very thing, Miss Palmer's second floor is to let furnished. You could take it for a week or two, until you have had time to decide upon your future course—and, stay, there is nothing to prevent your moving in to-night; is there, papa?"

"No," I replied; "Mrs. Josephs is better, and I think that the change will be of benefit to her, rather than otherwise. Yes, she might be safely moved at once."

"Very well, then, Jessie; let you and I go and see about it at at once; papa will have enough to do here with Mr. Page."

"By the bye," I exclaimed, looking around, "where is Mr. Page?"

"In the dining-room," suggested my wife.

No, he was not there.

"He has gone out," said Jessie, with confusion; and continued, "He will think me very ungrateful."

"Are you acquainted?" inquired my wife, apparently with no inconsiderable surprise."

"Yes, madam," replied the girl, simply. "I have known him for some time now—since gran' first went to the hospital. He was the dresser there, and was very kind to her. I was surprised to find him here when I called this afternoon."

"Hah!" exclaimed my wife, "you said he had gone out; is it to look out for lodgings for you?"

Jessie assented, colouring, and looking at me with an appealing glance in her large liquid blue eyes, continued, "I did not tell him all, doctor; I couldn't. He thinks it is only about the rent, you know."

How had my wife divined the young man's motive in going out? I am sure it would never have occurred to me. I have not the faintest notion; but it was evident she did not half like it, and why?

Well, who but a woman can fathom a woman's thoughts?

My wife was visibly annoyed at finding that her young *protégée* and my assistant were old acquaintances, and interested in each other; but again, why should she? What was it to her?—to me?—to anyone but themselves?

In any case, the young fellow's championship was not of such deep moment to the girl as to prevent her forgetting all about it almost as soon as proffered; but are not girls proverbially ungrateful to their champions? I think I have seen it so stated some-

where; but no matter. Jessie was evidently not the exception that proves the rule, for she continued:

"It was very kind of Mr. Page to offer to get a lodging for grandmamma, but I hope he has not done so." Here she coloured up again—"I would much rather go to Miss Palmer's," looking up at my wife, with an appealing expression.

"Very well," replied Mrs. De Vere, with something less of her late—shall I say, fondness for or interest in her *protégée*, "very well: we had better go at once, I think, as it well soon be getting dark."

"Shall you be in before tea?" I asked.

My wife nodded: "It will not take me five minutes, papa, to arrange about the lodgings, then I can get a cab at once for Mrs. Josephs, and it will be time enough to-morrow to remove their things."

"We have nothing worth moving," exclaimed Jessie.

"Oh, yes, you have," replied my wife; "we shall not leave a pin behind for that horrid old man."

The young girl turned pale and shuddered.

"I am thankful to you both," she exclaimed, taking one of each of our hands, and pressing them to her lips; "what might I not have become if I had not met you."

"Nothing very wicked," I exclaimed; but my wife, wiser, perhaps, merely said—"Come, it is getting late;" and just as I was on the point of opening the hall-door the knocker was raised, and startled me, for my "nerves" were not as yet, by any means, strong.

I opened the door, and my assistant, Mr. Page, entered, and seemed rather taken aback when he saw the hall—or passage, I should say, full of people—that is to say, my wife and myself, in what might have been the act of turning our young visitor out of the house.

"Jessie!—Miss Ransford!" he exclaimed, glancing first at the girl, then at my wife and me in turns. "What—where—I have got——"

Pitying his confusion, I exclaimed: "It's all right, thank you, Mr. Page; Mrs. De Vere is taking charge of this young lady."

"Yes, thank you so very much," said the "young lady," herself, "Mrs. De Vere has been kind enough to find us a convenient lodging."

"But I have taken one," he returned, with a hurt tone of voice.

"Never mind," said my wife, quietly—"it was very good-natured of you, Mr. Page; but you did not know probably that

Miss Rainsford (how soon she had caught up the name!) and I were old friends?"

"No," Mr. Page was not aware, nor apparently, very much gratified by the knowledge, when he had attained it.

"If you have been put to any expense in the matter, Page," I said, bungling as usual where I meant to do the youth a kindness, "I will see that you are recouped."

Without another word he darted past me into the surgery, while my wife and Jessie stepped out into the street.

"Poor fellow!" I heard her say, partly to herself and partly to my wife, "I am so sorry he is disappointed, for it was kind of him."

"It is much better as it is," replied my wife.

On consideration I thought so too, and yet I was sorry for the boy.

CHAPTER XI.

Poor old Mrs. Josephs, as my wife afterwards told me, was greatly elated at the idea of being possessed of such a vast sum of money as one hundred pounds, and insisted upon being immediately removed from the Rents to some other locality more befitting her altered and improved circumstances.

"It would have been amusing, papa, if it had not been painful, to see the airs the poor old soul gave herself, as soon as Jessie had told her of her good fortune—for it is a good fortune, don't you think so?"

"Assuredly," I replied, and continued, "but what are you going to do with them? Are they to live on the money until it is gone, or what?"

"I think," said my wife, "and Jessie agrees with me, that the best plan will be to buy some little business, in the fancy stationery line, for instance, that will enable her to earn enough to keep them comfortable, without her having to go out and leave her grandmother."

"You mean Jessie?"

"Yes; I heard Miss Isaacs was going to give up her shop, and I do not suppose she would want more than thirty or forty pounds for the good-will; and if so, that will be just the thing."

Miss Isaacs, as it proved, was a moderate-minded young person (not so very young, though, by the way), and was satisfied to accept thirty pounds for the transfer of her shop and business, into which our fair *protégée*, not without opposition on the part of her grandmother, was duly installed in the course of a week after their rescue from Rhymer's Rents, and the sale of the blue China vase

I suppose I was about her first customer; and while I was in the shop who should enter but Mr. Browne, cigar in mouth as usual.

"Ha! my dear," he exclaimed, holding out his great clumsy hand to her across the counter, "glad to see your business looking up—Oh! What! Wont you shake hands with me? No! Ah! well, I bear you no malice; though, if it hadn't been for me you'd never have been in the position you occupy at present, young lady."

"Sir," replied the girl, disdainfully, "I owe you nothing, not even thanks, and beg to say that if you come in here to buy anything, I shall not sell it to you; and if you do or do not, your room is much preferable to your company."

The speech was a trifle saucy, but the manner of the speaker was cool and collected. It was evident she bitterly felt the insult the old scoundrel had offered her, and had made up her mind to resent it to the uttermost. Still, it was an unfortunate speech; she had far better have treated him with silent contempt, which he was not keen-witted enough to understand; but her coolness enraged him, and he replied:

"Very good, my lady; very good, indeed; we shall see. You are not, perhaps, aware that this house is for sale; and I shall buy it, if but for the pleasure of——" he hesitated, and I feel sure he was on the point of saying, 'kicking you out of it,' but he changed his mind, and substituted, "having you for a tenant, my dear." And so saying, he turned about and walked out of the shop, without bestowing a glance upon me, who was standing beside him at the counter.

When Mr. Browne had retired, poor Jessie burst into tears, covered her face with her hands, and sobbed. "Is there nothing can be done to deliver me from that man's odious persecution? For months past my life has been hateful to me, owing to him. I could stab him!" and the girl raised herself up to her full height, her eyes sparkling, and looked the very counterfeit presentment of Judith about to drive the tent peg into Holofernes' temple. I almost shuddered.

"You must not mind him," I said. "If he should annoy you any more, the best thing to do will be to complain to the police, and have him bound over to keep the peace. Has he ever threatened you?"

"No, he is too cunning for that; but I cannot go anywhere that he does not follow me, and annoy me."

"What has he said to you?"

"I cannot tell you."

"Have you forgotten?"

"Forgotten! Oh! dear no; I wish I could; I am sure he refused to take our rent on purpose, so that he might get us into his power."

"Very likely; but what is it he has said to you?"

"He has wanted me, as I told you before, to go and live with him, and promised me everything, horses, carriages, jewellery—everything, if I would do so."

"And you refused?"

"Refused! yes; I did refuse;" then more slowly, "I hardly know what the end of it might have been, if you and Mrs. De Vere had not come to our aid."

"Surely——" I began.

She shook her head.

"Poverty is hard to bear; I have not been always used to poverty, neither has grandmamma, who, I am almost ashamed to say it, has encouraged him."

"Although she was aware that his attentions were not honourable?"

A whispered "Yes," attested to the deep sense of shame felt by Jessie for her relative's conduct towards her. Well, it was a happy thing to think the poor girl need be under no more apprehension on that score.

"Come," I said to myself, "it is time I was off. I have got my newspaper, and should be on my way to business;" then aloud, "Good morning, Miss Ransford; you will remember to send me in the papers every morning?"

Before the girl could reply, the shop-door opened again, and who should enter but my assistant, Mr. Page.

"Well, Jessie——" he began, and stopped, confused, on seeing me.

"I beg pardon, Dr. De Vere! I did not know you were here."

"No matter," I replied; "I only looked in for my matutinal paper which Miss Jessie omitted to send me this morning—what might your errand be?"

Of course, I had no right to put such a question, and evidently the young man thought so too, for he did not answer or attempt to answer it, but walked over, put his hand across the counter to Jessie, who shook it, but without the slightest change of colour, and returned it to him, as she might have done that of any other chance acquaintance, with whom business considerations might induce her to keep on civil terms.

He was in love, poor boy, without a doubt, but Jessie was not. She had not always known poverty, and had no desire to render her acquaintance with it permanent, by rushing into a hasty marriage with a penniless boy.

After all, it was no business of mine; so I turned about once more to leave the shop, but stopped upon Jessie calling after me:

"Doctor, will you not see gran' this morning? I know she wants to see you particularly."

"Very good," I replied; "how is she after her fatigue of twice changing her lodgings in little more than a week?"

"Wonderful," replied Jessie; "she seems almost herself again, only she cannot walk, and does not speak as distinctly as she used to do—this way, doctor, please," and the girl preceded me into the shop-parlour, where she had made up a bed for her aged relative during the day, as being more convenient than having her up-stairs, whither she was removed every evening after the shop was closed.

As Jessie said, I found the old lady very much improved, but frightfully querulous and exacting.

After some preliminary queries and answers, at which Jessie assisted, the young girl returned to the shop leaving me alone with her grandmother, who presently began, very earnestly, to tell me something which I could not exactly make out, for, to tell the truth, I was not paying as much attention to her complaints as I should have done, being, almost unconsciously, occupied in watching her granddaughter and my assistant through the glass-door that opened into the shop.

He was leaning across the counter, talking very earnestly to her, while Jessie stood opposite to him with her eyes fixed on the ground, evidently an attentive listener to whatever he was saying.

Suddenly she looked up, fixed her gaze on his and said something slowly, deliberately, and evidently not without a good deal of consideration; whatever it was, it made an impression on the youth, who coloured deeply, leaned more across the counter and began to speak again, more earnestly than before; presently I saw Jessie's brow contract, she stamped her foot, and moved impatiently a little to one side; my assistant then drew back, and said something more, whereupon she gave him her hand, he pressed it to his lips for an instant and rushed from the shop; Jessie did not even follow him with her eyes, but began arranging the papers on the counter, evidently quite unmoved by whatever had transpired between them.

I was recalled from the reverie into which the foregoing scene had plunged me by an impatient exclamation of Mrs. Josephs, who, as well as her imperfect articulation would permit, exclaimed that I did not at all understand her case, and she must have a physician.

"A physician!" the word recalled me to my senses; for, if there is one thing in all the world connected with my profession, or rather the practice of it, that I detest more than another, it is these sham consultations with a physician.

Of course there are exceptions to every rule, and I know a few consultants, one in particular, who are strictly honourable men, who support, rather than snub, the practitioner who calls them in; but, as I have said, these are the exceptions, not the rule. In general your consulting physician is a very great person—in his own opinion, at all events—and looks with utter contempt upon the medical man who has sent for him, and who, not unfrequently, makes a bad debt—while he, the eminent physician, pockets his guinea fee.

If the medical man ventures to suggest that the line of treatment he has been pursuing is about the most appropriate for the case he has studied from the commencement of the attack, the physician makes a point of altering it entirely, and generally ends by observing to the patient's friends—"Now, I think, we shall do nicely; I have ordered something which will soon put us to rights;" or—"Oh! I shall soon have the patient up and about;" or words to that effect, which have the effect of utterly destroying the family's confidence in their medical man, and driving them in future into the physician's own arms, which was exactly the object he had in view when he made the derogatory remarks; when really the patient had just reached the turning-point of the disease, and the new prescription rather retarded than hastened the impending convalescence.

No, I am not fond of physicians; after all, what can a man know of the constitution of a person whom he sees for a few minutes for the first time in his life, in comparison to another who has studied it for years in health as well as in disease? Not much in my opinion, and I am cognisant of numerous cases where the interference of a strange physician, called in by over-anxious friends, has been actually productive of the very catastrophe they intended to avert; and others where the recovery was retarded, or indefinitely postponed.

Under the circumstances, it is not to be wondered at that I did not very much admire my old patient's demand for a physician.

Not understand her case! nonsense! why I had found her at death's door, and my care, and that of my wife, had restored her to what she was: so great an improvement on the condition in which she was when I first saw her, that even her granddaughter called it "wonderful;" and so it was, yet she wanted "A physician."

"Oh! very well, Mrs. Josephs," I replied, "by all means. What physician would you like to see?"

"I don't know, doctor; anyone you would like to call in."

"I do not want to call in anyone, Mrs. Josephs; if you do, that is quite another matter. Have whom you will."

"I don't know one, doctor."

I see; you believe I do not understand your case, and yet you are willing to refer the choice of a physician to me. How am I to know one physician from another?"

"You often call them in?"

"I never call in but one, and your complaint is not in his line of practice. You had better choose for yourself."

"I don't know any."

I named several—Blank, Bank, Rank, &c. "Now, Mrs. Josephs, which of these gentlemen is it to be?"

"I'm sure I don't know, doctor; whichever you please."

"It is to please you, Mrs. Josephs, not me."

"Jessie! Where is Jessie?" querulously called the old woman. "I want Jessie; why is she not here?"

"Miss Jessie!" I exclaimed, opening the door that led into the shop, "your grandmother wants you for a minute."

Jessie obeyed the summons in an instant. "Yes, gran'; what do you want?"

"Your grandmother," I replied, speaking for the old lady, "thinks I do not understand her case, and wishes a physician to be called in."

"Gran'!" exclaimed Jessie, colouring to the tip of her ears, "how can you be so ungrateful! Not understand your case, when Dr. De Vere found you all but dead, and now, in little more than a week, you are able to speak nearly as well as ever you did; and can almost walk! I am ashamed of you!"

The old woman thereupon wished herself dead and out of her misery.

I interposed, "Let her have a physician, if she wishes it, Miss Jessie; she will not be happy unless she sees one."

"It is such an expense!" replied the granddaughter.

"A guinea or two," I returned.

"Thrown away," continued the girl.

"Not if it satisfies and composes her," I replied. "Her mind seems bent on it; and if she grew worse, you might think hereafter that matters might have ended differently if you had had a consultation on her case, as she wished it."

"Whatever happens, doctor, I have, and will have, the fullest confidence in you."

I bowed.

"Besides," continued the girl, "Willie—I mean, Mr. Page (colouring deeply) has seen her, and thinks just as you do, that she is now about as well as she ever will be, poor old gran', and that it is not possible to do anything more for her than you have done, and are doing."

"Once more I bowed. "As you please."

"Very well; that is settled, then."

"In that case," I replied, "I shall send her some more medicine, and we will go on exactly as we have been doing. Good morning, Mrs. Josephs! good morning, Jessie!"

"Good morning, doctor!"

"Upon my word!" was the exclamation that escaped me, as I stepped into the street, "there seems to be more in the affair than I thought for. 'Willie—Mr. Page, I mean.' Well, upon my word. I wonder what my wife will say?"

CHAPTER XII.

YES; I wondered what my wife would say; but I had to wait some time before I knew, and when the opportunity of asking her arrived, I had something else to think of that interested us all a great deal more.

We were blessed with a tolerably large family, as I think I have already informed the reader, and had all hitherto enjoyed an almost complete immunity from illness; but, alas! we were not destined to be much longer so highly favoured; for of all earthly blessings, health is undoubtedly the greatest, and, perhaps, least prized until impaired or lost.

"It is no wonder your children look so well, doctor," had often been remarked to me, "for you are always on the spot to physic them as soon as ever they show the least symtom of being ill."

"Quite a mistake, my dear madam," I would reply; "have you never heard the proverb, 'No one so badly shod as the cobbler's wife?' The fact is, if no children took more 'physic' than mine do, there would not be as much work for us medical men to do as there is. I do not believe my seven have ever had sixpenny-worth of medicine among them since they were born to the present day."

"Law! doctor, however do you manage?"

"Manage, my dear madam? Give them plenty of plain wholesome food; as much fresh air, night and day, as can be got in over-crowded, smoky London; and send them away to the sea-side every summer for a month or two; not forgetting, of course, a plentiful supply of the best milk to be obtained at all seasons of the year."

It is wrong to boast overmuch—decidedly wrong. So at least I have often heard it said, and so I am very much inclined to think; for after all, though I am not a religious man—have not time, in fact, to devote to anything but my daily work, or perhaps I ought to say 'had,' for I certainly enjoy a good deal more leisure now than used formerly to fall to my share—after all there is a Power that overrules us and our ways, and sees fit to keep our exuberant belief in ourselves within proper limits. We thanklessly receive that Power's benefits, and repose securely under its protection, and ascribe everything to our own superior management and tact, if not to our transcendent knowledge and ability.

What wonder if that Power should, under the circumstances, now and then choose to smite down the tallest-growing poppy-heads in our little gardens? Nay, it is incumbent on it to do so, if only in vindication of its own supremacy.

Not that I had ever been openly wont to boast of my children's rosy faces and unfailing health. On the contrary, I usually pooh-pooh'd the notion of their being superior in that respect to other children, when admiring friends, or interested pretenders to friendship, extolled their manners and good looks; but in my heart of hearts, I fear, I endorsed every word of the said eulogiums, or even went beyond them in praise of my "own flesh and blood;" which was wrong of me, no doubt, but who is always wise?

Soon after Mr. Page's arrival among us, our little ones "caught cold,"—a conventional phrase, signifying little or a very great deal, according to circumstances; but we thought nothing of it, my wife and I—we could not bring ourselves to believe that they were, or were going to be, ill. We are so prone, like the cat in Florian's fable, to discredit what we do not wish to see; even rejecting the evidence of our senses, when it is unpleasing to our prejudice, or offensive to our pride.

"There are none so blind as those that wont see," says the proverb; and as proverbs are, or at least are supposed to be, an embodiment of the collective wisdom of ages, doubtless what they affirm may, generally, be accepted as the truth; as most of us, I think, have, some time or other, often when it has been too late, discovered to our cost.

The children were ill, "poorly" we were at length compelled to admit, but it was only "a little cold," nothing more; they would be all right again in a day or two—hot water for their feet on going to bed, gruel, and so forth—what was the use of making a fuss?

"It is my opinion," remarked Mr. Page one day at dinner, referring to our Alfred, the youngest but one, "that he is seriously ill."

"Pooh! nonsense!" I replied, "he is eating his dinner heartily, and so cannot have very much the matter with him."

As I spoke, however, I noticed that the child breathed heavily, and that his eyes had a languid, not to say leaden, expression in them that was most unusual.

Nothing more was said at the time, however; but, after the cloth had been removed, my assistant placed the little fellow standing on a chair, applied a stethoscope to his back, listened for a moment attentively, and then, turning to me with an air more of sorrow than triumph, which the circumstances would have almost justified him in assuming, invited me to "Listen."

I did so.

"Good gracious! I had no idea; poor little darling!"

"What is it?" exclaimed my wife, alarmed by my manner.

"I am sorry to say, my dear," I replied, with quivering lip and tremulous voice, for I bitterly reproached myself for my wilful blindness in the matter—"I am sorry to say, my dear, that the poor little fellow has got a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs; what a dunce I am, not to have detected it before!"

"Dear! dear!" cried my wife, catching the terrified child in her arms, and pressing him to her bosom, "precious darling!" Then turning to me, "Is there any danger?"

I nodded an affirmative—I could not trust myself to speak.

"It is a complaint," interposed the assistant, "that generally terminates favourably in young persons, particularly when they have a sound constitution, like my little friend here."

My wife thanked the young fellow with her eyes and a motion of the lips; words, for the time being, were not to be trusted to with either of us.

I prescribed, *secundem artem*, for the little patient, after a hurried consultation with my assistant, or, I should say, *confrère*, and hoped that all might go well; but I was mistaken, the boy grew steadily worse and worse, and by evening was separated from the invisible world by the thinnest and most flimsy of partitions.

Usually one of the quietest and most amiable of children, Alfred's whole nature seemed changed by his illness, and he became as wilful and tiresome as he had formerly been docile and obedient; manage him I could not, nor was his mother or sister more successful, or his nurse who had had charge of him from his birth. We could none of us do anything with him, and it seemed that he must shortly sink.

"What am I to do with you, my poor child?" I at last exclaimed in an agony of despair, after vainly endeavouring to apply a poultice to his chest; he having, during the interval, almost screamed himself into convulsions. "What am I to do with you, my poor child

"Willie put it on," panted the little fellow, catching his breath at the rate of about forty inspirations per minute: "Willie put it on."

I rushed down stairs, three steps at a time, into the surgery where my assistant was interviewing a couple of club-patients.

"Mr. Page, would you mind going upstairs to our bedroom? Alfie is calling for you, and says he will let you put on the poultice for him."

"Certainly," replied my assistant, and ran out of the room and up the stairs in a moment, leaving the club-men somewhat surprised at his abrupt departure, no less than at my excited entrance into the surgery. I soon got rid of them, however, and flew after him.

The change was wonderful! Although I had not been absent more than five minutes, instead of the livid countenance, sobbing voice, and limbs convulsed with passion, I had left behind, when I hurriedly ran downstairs for help, I found my poor little son in his right mind, clothed in his poultice, smiling and apparently already much better. He was lying in Mr. Page's arms, who was singing to him in a low, sweet voice that seemed to have soothed all the little fellow's fears, and much of his pains away; and I augured for him a safe and speedy restoration to health; but I was again mistaken.

My wife had entire confidence in my professional skill, and, I must confess, so had I; but whether it was that my heart, on this occasion, outweighed my head, or that my over-anxiety, which was after all but natural, paralysed the inventive faculty in which I took such pride, I cannot say; certain it is that the boy did not get on at all; although I scrupled not to avail myself of any hints that my assistant delicately, and, as it were, suggestively dropped from time to time.

For three days and nights "Willie," as our poor little boy would call his more than kind friend and nurse, never left his little charge—nursing him, feeding him, giving him his medicine, singing to him, and telling him stories; and never was patient more exacting. Alfie's nurse, however, bore all with more than womanly patience, and attended to the child with a mother's care, sleeping only while the boy slept, and never leaving him, even to take his meals, until all immediate danger had passed away.

There was no doubt about it, under Providence, to William Page our Alfred owed his life; and we all, I trust, were correspondingly grateful to his preserver. How it came about I scarcely know, but long before the child's complete restoration, everyone of us had got to call the young man, whom we had known but a few weeks, and to whom we were all of us so deeply indebted, by his

Christian name, or rather by that abbreviation of it that the little patient had made us so familiar with during those weary days.

To my wife and me he was, indeed, a son, and to the children a brother. We appeared to have known him all our lives, and the thing I seemed to wonder at was, where he had been staying for so long away from us. Surely he had been at boarding-school, and had now come home for good? It was impossible for us to do without him any more. While he, on his part, seemed as familiar with us and our ways as if he had known us all his life; spoke of "our" house, "our" patients, and "our" horses, as if he had really been one of ourselves; nor did it seem strange, to me at least, that he should do so.

I have said that I am not a religious man, that I have no time to spare for church-going, good-book reading, and so on; nor have I. But there is one thing—I might say, two—I never omitted to do since I first entered on married life—the first to say "grace" after dinner, the second, of a Sunday evening to hear certain hymns sung, at first by my wife, and afterwards, as our family sprang up around us, by my daughters; but we sadly wanted a male voice to render the harmony of our little sacred concert complete; for though I liked to listen, I could take no part in the performance, having no more voice than one of those "canorous" crows I remember reading about in some old book of natural history. Alfie's illness, however, among many other things, revealed to us that our new inmate had a sweet voice; and on the first Sunday evening after the dear little fellow had been restored to us, his preserver was impressed into the service.

We were all in the drawing-room—mamma at the piano, the boys and girls grouped round her, I and my assistant sitting on the sofa, looking over a book of photographs, to which sundry new additions had been made. Mamma had struck the first chord, when a thought occurred to me, and I spoke.

"Willie, why don't you join them?"

"I?" he replied. "Oh, I don't sing."

"Oh!" in chorus from us all. Alfie, who was sitting on my knee, adding, "What a tory, Willie; you know you does, for you used to ting to me when I was tick."

"Bless the boy!" exclaimed my assistant, leaning across me to kiss the child, "I could hum to you, you dear little man, but I cannot sing."

"You must try," said Ethel. "I know you can; come on."

"Come, make haste! no excuse! no nonsense!" thus we all, in various keys.

Willie complied.

It was a treat. His voice was quite untrained, but naturally

soft and flute-like, and his ear for tune was excellent. I, it is true, was not a critical judge, but I know what pleases me, and seldom had I enjoyed a greater treat.

When our repertoire was exhausted, "You must sing a solo," said my wife; and the young man complied.

"You must join the choir," then exclaimed Ethel, who belonged to that of our church—a place of which I seldom saw the inside, being, usually, too busy to go in the morning, and too tired, or lazy, if you will, in the evening; but of which my wife and family were regular attendants.

Willie smiled. "I never like to refuse a young lady's request," he answered; "but one must draw the line somewhere, and I do at parish church choirs," nor could any amount of entreaty, or persuasion, induce him to break his resolution on this point. "I have particular reasons for it," he replied, when pressed to account for his evident reluctance to sing in the church.

The elder children would have harassed him with further questions, but I interposed, and reminded them that it was about time they went to bed, a diversion which had the effect of relieving our young friend from further importunity for the time.

"Perhaps," I thought to myself, "he is a Dissenter"—for I had not thought of asking him, when I engaged his services, to what religious denomination he belonged,—"and does not like to go to church."

But I was wrong, as I often am, when I attempt a guess, for on the following Sunday morning, which was the first since his arrival among us that it chanced he was at liberty to go, he accompanied my wife and the children to worship; and "Found out all the places in the prayer-book, papa, just as if he had been used to it all his life," as Ethel, on her return home, imparted to me in confidence.

Yes, there was decidedly something mysterious about the youth. At times a look, a word of his would make me start, and say to myself, "Certainly, I have seen that look, or heard that voice before," and then before I could grasp the recollection of the time or place, his next look or word would banish the impression, and compel me, in spite of myself almost, to admit that I must be mistaken.

And, yet, who is there that has not been conscious at times of similar mysterious, I cannot call them recollections, but impressions, that certain scenes have been similarly acted in our presence at some former period of our existence, and that not in dreams, but in actual life; and then the image fades away, and we are left in doubt and bewilderment to speculate and wonder, think and dream?

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN INDIAN MAGISTRATE.

THE BRUTAL GOLDSMITH.

"DOES your headache trouble you much, Nundooah?" asked Raibut of her son, whom she had apprenticed to a goldsmith.

"It is not the headache, mother, that troubles me. I suffer a thousand aches from the ill-treatment I receive from the man under whom you have placed me; and I often think of running away from him."

Nundooah was only twelve years old, and his mother had placed him as an apprentice under a goldsmith of Cawnpore, named Choonoo, to learn the trade. She was much vexed by the complaints of the boy, and his very appearance showed that his complaints were well founded.

"I shall see Choonoo in a day or two," said Raibut, "and tell him to treat you more kindly. Don't you get frightened, my boy. If you run away from him, you will never learn to earn your livelihood."

Raibut did go to talk over the matter with Choonoo, and Choonoo promised to be more kind to the boy in future. But he was a man of a capricious temper, and no promises could bind him down for any long period. The ill-treatment was removed off and on, and at last little Nundooah got so frightened that he ran away from the goldsmith to his mother, and refused to return.

"Come, we will settle the matter in this way," said the mother. "I shall place you under another goldsmith whom I know, and you must promise to stick to the trade with him for my sake."

This was done accordingly; and Nundooah, finding a good master in the new man, who was named Behary, became very attentive to his work. But Choonoo was mightily annoyed at his desertion, and threatened to punish him.

"How is it that the months seem so short now, mother? The months I passed with Choonoo were very long ones, and I thought they would never end; but the months with Behary are both brief and pleasant."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Nundooah. It shows that you like your new master better than your old one. I trust that you are learning your work better with him also?"

"Oh, yes, mother! Behary treats me so affectionately that I take a pleasure in doing all he tells me to perform. I shall never complain of Behary to you, nor desert him"

Raibut felt that he would do neither; he was looking so well now, and was in such good spirits. He had come home to spend the Dusserah holidays with her, but had no wish to prolong his vacation; and Behary's report to her was that he was very assiduous, and shot rapidly forward in the business he was learning.

Choonoo was vindictive, and was still looking after the apprentice who had deserted him. He had told him that he would punish him, but Behary was so careful of Nundooah that Choonoo had hitherto not been able to carry out his threat. The return of the boy to his mother gave him the opportunity he was waiting for. "I shall see him at his mother's house, and give him a good thrashing there."

Raibut was not at home when Choonoo came; he only found Nundooah there, watching some cooking dishes then on the fire.

"Now is the time for it, and I shall have my vengeance in a novel way, too," said Choonoo to himself: and he at once laid hold of the boy, and, after tying him down, gagged his mouth by forcing some clothing into it. He then heated an iron spoon (*hatta*) and deliberately branded the boy in twelve different parts of the body. Poor Nundooah, unable to struggle or to cry out, writhed in agony; while Choonoo quietly left the house, leaving him bound and unable to help himself.

The boy was discovered in great pain when his mother came home, and continued to suffer for a long time in hospital; and, when he did come out of the hospital, he brought back with him marks on his body which were indelible.

Now, Choonoo, you have had your revenge, and it is only fair that the boy should have his turn also.

Choonoo tried to prevent this by a precipitate flight; but was overtaken, captured, and brought to trial. He was convicted of wounding, and sentenced to four years' imprisonment, and a fine of Rs. 100, which being realised, was paid over as compensation to Nundooah.

"What shall I do with the money, mother? You can take it if you like."

"Yes, boy; I shall keep it with me, and when you are old enough to be married, it will help us to get you an active wife."

THE ENHANCEMENT OF RENTS.

"My lord's house has prospered on the rents we have hitherto paid him. Why should my lord now seek to enhance the rents?"

"Because, Panchoo, the rents of all the neighbouring lands have been raised. If the ryots of the other *talooks* can pay higher

rents, there is no reason why you should be unable or unwilling to do so."

"Your ryots have hitherto been very faithful to you and yours. Do you think they can continue to be as faithful when you point the knife to their throats?"

"Well, I can't purchase what you call your faithfulness by such a heavy sacrifice of rent as I am suffering at present. The notice has been served all round, and the rents will be raised in due course as the law provides."

The *talookdar* introduced was Gour Das Rai, whose estate was in the district of Dhullooah, of which he was a resident. The rents were enhanced as he had intimated; but the ryots refused to pay the higher rates. He was obliged, therefore, to institute a suit against them in the Moonsiff's court, but had great difficulty in getting witnesses to establish the serving of notices on the ryots.

"It is a matter of life and death with us," said the ryots, "and we shall not allow any witnesses to appear against us."

After much difficulty the *talookdar* was able, at least, to secure some witnesses, and among them one very respectable man named Abbas Ali, on whose testimony the issue of the suit would, it was understood by both parties, mainly depend.

"Well, Abbas," said Panchoo, addressing him, "are you, being a Mahomedan, going to give evidence against Mahomedans on behalf of a Hindu!"

"Evidence is given on oath," replied Abbas, "and I must tell the truth without reference to the nationality or religion of the parties concerned."

"No, you shall not do so!" cried a tumult of voices. "Even the *Moolah* does not assert that it is necessary to tell the truth on behalf of an unbelieving Kaffir."

"Then the *Moolah* and I are not of one mind, my friends; and, may be, our religions also are different. But there is no need for discussing these points at present. You may depend upon it that I shall do what is right if I have to appear before the *hakeem*."

This was just what the ryots did not wish him to do. Their fate depended on his evidence: would he ruin them all by his words? They endeavoured hard to dissuade him from going to the court at all; but he would not listen to them. They then began to threaten him; but he was equally indifferent to their threats.

"There is no help for it, then," said Panchoo. "We must make an example of him."

A party of thirty men attacked the house of Abbas Ali at mid-

day to capture him; but Abbas, having received timely intimation of their approach, had bolted from it. It was difficult for some time to find out whither he had gone; but they learnt at last from a little boy that he had taken refuge with his maternal uncle, Zelna Gazee, who lived at a short distance from his house.

"It were well for thee, Zelna Gazee, to give up Abbas," said one of the party on approaching his house, and finding him at the door with a child in his arms. "We are not thy enemies, and there is no reason why you should make us so."

"It is impossible that I can give up my own nephew to an irritated mob," replied the man addressed. "If you will promise not to hurt him——"

"Don't come to any terms with them, *Dadajee*," here interposed a brother of Zelna Gazee. "Words are useless with them, for they will surely not abide by any promise they may make; and, besides that, we cannot surrender Abbas on any conditions."

"Can't you? Then we shall force you to do it;" and saying this the rioters at once began to assault both Zelna Gazee and his brother.

"Stop! stop!" cried out the former, "or you will kill the child in my arms."

But they were too excited to heed him, and a blow aimed at the father smashed the head of the child.

There was no intention to kill the child, or any one else; and the rioters, seeing what they had done in their fury, ran off pell-mell to screen themselves.

"You cannot escape now," said Abbas Ali, coming out of the house. "I know every one of you, and shall direct the police against you."

Fourteen persons were placed on trial for riot, and convicted. The child's death, it was readily believed, was accidental; but it was clear, at the same time, that the riot was unprovoked, and, as the prisoners were known to be very turbulent characters, there was no ground for showing any leniency. They were all sentenced to the same punishment—namely, imprisonment for seven years, with labour and irons.

. . . . . .

"Your enemies have been punished, *Mohasoy*," said the ryots to their talookdar. "Panchoo was the ringleader, and with him all opposition to your wishes has disappeared. Do with us now, oh, master! as thou wilt."

"There is nothing more to be done on my part, my friends," returned the talookdar, with a smile. "The rents have been enhanced. Don't create difficulties in paying them, and everything will go on smoothly as before."

WHO USED THE SPEAR?

THE people of the village of Chukrobati cultivated indigo yearly for the Dagoreba factory in the district of Nudhea, the factory being about three miles distant from the village. They had, however, volunteered not to do so one season, and a council was held in the factory as to the course to be followed.

"We must force them to take an advance of money, Bishendyal," said the manager of the factory, addressing the *Jemadar*, who was the man next to him in importance on the establishment, "and you must arrange for that in the best way you can."

"All right, sir," responded Bishendyal; "I was only waiting to know your mind."

A party was formed next morning to carry out the wishes of the manager, and Bishendyal headed it with a spear in his hand. He had two efficient deputies under him—namely, one named Haran Ghose, who was the *Khalasee* at Dagoreba, and another named Ram Sing, a tall, strong man, blind of one eye, who was an *omedwar*, or hanger-on about the factory. The latter of the two was especially eager to prove himself of use, in the hope of securing an appointment and Bishendyal approved his zeal with a gracious smile.

They did not slumber over their work. The three miles lying between the village and the factory were soon passed, and the villagers surprised by their assailants almost in their sleep.

"Up! men of Chukrobati!" shrieked out the women, who are always the earliest risers almost in every village. "The enemy is on you already! Up, and show a bold fight, or there will be more mischief than you will be able to repair!"

But the men did not respond to this call with sufficient alacrity, and the consequence was that five of the village elders were captured, with whom the factory party began a rapid retreat. This was observed by a *chowkeydar* named Komul, who naturally objected to any person being carried off from the village by force, and the altercation giving time to the villagers to assemble, there was soon a large gathering round the factory party, and a free exchange of hard words and unfriendly gestures.

"Strike down the *chowkeydar*, to begin with!" at last exclaimed Haran Ghose. "It is he who is inciting the villagers against us;" and the next moment the *chowkeydar* was speared through, after which both parties ran off from the spot—the assailants to seek refuge in the factory, and the villagers to their huts. At this moment the *thaanah mohurer* accidentally arrived at the place, and was just in time to take down the deposition of the wounded man, who was then sent off to the police station; which, however, he did not reach, dying on the way.

The factory people were placed on their trial for having caused the death of Komul, but the only evidence against them was that of the five villagers whom they had captured and were taking away forcibly to the factory. These men were the elders of the village, all of them doubled down by age, who could not well be suspected of having had any hand in a disturbance. Besides them many others from the village were present at the spot when the disturbance occurred; but they were so afraid of coming into difficulty that not one of them came forward to say what they had seen or known.

The evidence of the five old men was that Haran Ghose gave the order to strike down the *chowkeydar*, and that Ram Sing speared him, and as that was also the purport of the deposition made in *articulo morte* by the deceased, Ram Sing was convicted on their testimony of having caused Komul's death by a spear thrust, and Haran Ghose of being an accomplice in the assault and seizure of the villagers, in connection with which the deceased was slain; the first being sentenced to death, and the second to fourteen years' imprisonment with labour and irons.

"You don't know what you are about, sir!" cried out Mr. Brown, the owner of the Dagoreba factory, as he rushed into the court after the above sentences had been recorded by the Judge. "It is not Ram Sing, but Bishendyal who headed the party that went out of the factory; and Bishendyal was the only person who was armed with a spear."

"I must hear more from you, Mr. Brown, before I modify the decision I have recorded," said the judge. "You are doubtless able to give further information in regard to this matter."

"This only, that I have learnt from Bishendyal himself that he had wounded one of the villagers in self-defence, and as Komul seems to have been the only man wounded on the occasion, I have given Bishendyal into custody since."

Bishendyal was now tried for having caused the death of Komul, and being convicted, was sentenced to suffer death, while the sentence on Ram Sing was modified to fourteen years' imprisonment and hard labour in irons. These sentences were confirmed by the supreme criminal court of appeal, with the remark that the indigo planter ought to have communicated the information given by him at the eleventh hour at an earlier stage of the proceedings. A little more delay on his part might have led to very lamentable results.

THE JYNTEAH SACRIFICES.

THEY had been married ten years, but no children had been born to them, and the husband and the wife felt equally wretched. The wife was the sister of the Rajah of Jynteah; her husband was named Oochang Rungout, and had the title of *Kooar* attached to his name.

They loved each other well, but notwithstanding that love, felt a void and emptiness in life. Some regard children as the plagues of existence; but those who have them not are yet more unhappy.

For ten years husband and wife had sighed together, and tried every means indicated by superstition to remedy their misfortune. Among these means the most important were human sacrifices, and Oochang Rungout had offered a victim every year either to Kali or Doorga, but all to no purpose. The Rajah of Jynteah abhorred the practice, but was unable to prevent his brother-in-law and his sister from having their own way in the matter.

"You know nothing about the mystery, Ram Sing," was their invariable reply to his remonstrances. "The *Sactis* can grant any boon they are asked for, provided they are well bribed; and they delight in nothing so much as in human blood."

"But where is the human blood to come from? I cannot permit any of my subjects being entrapped and slaughtered, even to remove your sterility, sister."

"You have given orders already to that effect, Ram Sing. No victim can be seized in Jynteah for slaughter; and have we not always respected the order? For several years past our victims have come from Cachar, or from the British territories."

"And the consequence is that I have ever since been in hot water with my neighbours.* Why not sacrifice any number of sheep, goats, and buffaloes, instead of human victims?"

"How foolishly you speak, surely!" said the sister, in reply. "If the gods want human blood, how can any other blood be a substitute for it? But there is no need for prolonging the discussion. I must have a man to sacrifice every year, so long as I am not cured of my distemper; and I will not allow you or anybody else to overrule me. I won't take any victim from Jynteah, if I can help it. Don't you offer any hindrance to my getting victims from other places."

It is not exactly known how many victims were sacrificed in this way every year. One victim only was ostensibly sought for, but as the sacrificial period embraced four months, from *Magh* to *Bysakh* and as several parties were sent out in different directions to capture victims, it is believed that more than one victim was, every season secured and decapitated. The rite was always performed in secrecy in the presence of both the *Kooar* and his wife. The victim was adorned with flowers, and was made to sit down, after which his throat was deliberately severed with a sacrificial knife. The sterile wife then bathed herself in the blood, while her husband's forehead was also dotted with it. But though the rite had been persistently

*Both Jynteah and Cachar were independent States at this time.

performed in this way for ten years, the *Sactis* were still as obdurate as ever. Why was this so? The necessary explanation was at last vouchsafed by the priests.

. . . . . .

"To what place do you belong, Buktear?"

"I am an inhabitant of Bhumkhal, a subject of the Rajah, and a cultivator by profession."

"Will you get me a human victim for sacrifice?"

"I shall try, sir."

"But, mind, the rites have hitherto been ineffectual, on account of disqualifications in the victims secured. We have sacrificed victims without reference to their age and health. The priests now tell us that the victim must invariably be a young man who has just attained his adolescence, that is, between fourteen and sixteen years old, and that he must be both healthy and strong."

"Where am I to get such a victim, sir?" asked the man spoken to, scratching his head.

"Why, in British territory, to be sure. It must be as easy to get a man of this description as any other there. You have only to look out about yourself somewhat more carefully."

"Very good, sir, I shall try."

"Prepare to start, then, as soon as you can. Have you got associates to help you?"

"I have secured two."

"Come with them, then, to receive the blessings of the priests, and your difficulties will be considerably lightened."

They started on their enterprise duly blessed; and arriving at Zeleekhal, in Sylhet, which is close to the Jynteah frontier, captured a boy of fifteen years, named Munnoo, who was herding cattle. He was pounced on so suddenly that, though strong and active, he was unable to offer much resistance; but he made use of his lungs to some purpose, his cries bringing many people of the village to his rescue. Taken in the act the kidnappers struggled hard to get off; but the villagers had collected in sufficient numbers to overpower them.

"What did the wretches want the boy for?" asked an old woman of his rescuers. "He has no ornaments or clothes of any value on him to tempt a thief."

"Oh! they wanted to take him off to some other country, and there sell him off as a slave."

They were all surprised and horrified when the confession of Buktear and his associates explained the real object of the seizure.

"Are these men or fiends?"

"Fiends, to be sure; but worse fiends than them are those who have been instigating them to the crime."

The confession of the prisoners was full, free, and accordant; and they were all convicted on it, and sentenced to fourteen years imprisonment each, with hard labour, in the Alipore Jail. A strong remonstrance was at the same time addressed to the Rajah of Jynteah against the outrages made on the British frontier, and he was expressly told that on further repetition of such attempts the British Government would demand the surrender of the high individuals at whose instance they had hitherto been made. This had the desired effect. It reconciled the *Kooar* and his wife to the crook in their lot.

THE DEAD CHILD CLAIMED.

THE house of Dhulleep Sing was in the suburbs of Patna, about half a mile distant from the main road. The place had a bad reputation, as the haunt of all the Patna thieves, and Dhulleep Sing himself, though a zemindar, had not a better name. A little fresh-delivered child was found one afternoon near a drain of the house, lying dead on a litter of straw, and the zemindar was called upon to account for it.

"This passes a joke!" said Dhulleep Sing. "I really do not know the bitch that has littered here."

"But you must find her out, zemindar," said the Daroga; "none of the houries of the neighbourhood can be unknown to you."

"Not unknown to me? What do you mean, Daroga *sahele*? You don't suspect that I have had any hand in doing away with the child?"

"Not exactly; but the child seems to have some family likeness to you, and when the mother is discovered, she may not perhaps deny all knowledge of you as you do of her."

"Now, really, this is too bad, Darogajee! I tell you, on my honour, that I know nothing whatever about the woman or the brat!"

"Then, like a good man, prove your honesty by helping me to find out those who have thrown out the child. You are acquainted with the neighbours, and will be able at least to name the ladies who were expecting an early delivery."

Of course Dhulleep Sing did name a good many of them; but the inquiry on that information did not fructify, as none of the women named had yet been delivered.

"Well, we shall watch the child from a distance, and see if the parties concerned in its destruction do not discover of themselves," said the Daroga, taking up his post at the foot of an almond tree, a few paces off from the place where the child lay. He waited

for more than two hours, and was about to abandon the watch when he saw a young female mendicant approaching the spot in an exhausted condition.

"This must be the mother, surely," said the Daroga to himself; and he found that his conjecture was correct, for the girl cried out bitterly on seeing that the child was dead.

"Now, who are you, woman? and wherefore are you crying for the child?" asked the Daroga, coming forward to meet her.

"Oh, sir! I am the mother of the child, and it has died because I deserted it."

The detailed statement extracted from her was this: She was a mendicant, named Bihsee, a houseless wanderer, without food, funds, or friends. Her intellect also had become very weak from the miseries she had endured. She had been turned out of doors by her father about two years before for criminal indiscretion, and had since then lived by beggary. The thieves of the neighbourhood knew her well, but contributed little to her support. The child now lying dead was begotten on her by a *budmash*, named Bheekalall, well known to the police, who took no notice of her after she became pregnant. She could not even get a shed to be delivered in, and, when the pains of labour came on her, she was only able to draw out some straw from Dhulleep Sing's stack, and to lie down on it near the drain, where she was delivered. She then felt cold and hungry, and, though still very weak, was obliged to leave the litter to beg for food and to warm herself in the sun. She did not leave the child to perish, but to seek for food for herself that she might be able to suckle the child. The child died from cold and the will of God. If she had even a bit of rag besides that which she could have not remove from her loins, she would have covered it so as to protect it from the cold.

There was not an eye in the throng that had crowded round the poor girl that was not affected by her story, and the rough-hearted Daroga coughed frequently to hide the feelings that were becoming oppressive to him. The woman was arrested and brought to trial, but only to be acquitted and released. At the earnest pressure of the police the father was prevailed upon to take back his erring daughter. Bheeka was captured as a burglar a few months after, and suitably punished.

THE OLD BROOM, OR LOVE ACROSS THE BORDER.

"WHY are you looking so sad, husband? What has happened?" asked Sreemutty, the wife of Davoreah Das, a farmer of Rungpore, who owned a pretty estate in that district.

"How can I help grieving?" replied Davoreah Das. "That fellow Beersadoo has not only become useless himself, but is corrupting all my other ryots, and I can get no work from any of them now all the day long."

"That is not matter to grieve for, surely," said the wife. "Turn out the whole set, and get new ryots in their place. New brooms always sweep best."

The ryots were much enraged when Davoreah did as his wife had suggested, and, on leaving his estate, they threatened Sreemutty that they would make her a widow. But Sreemutty was not a woman to be trifled with, and, pursuing Roopa, the man who had spoken to her in that sense, she so belaboured him with a broom that he was only too glad to increase the distance between them.

The new ryots worked well, and Davoreah had no reason to regret the change; but Roopa did not forget the thrashing he had received, and schemed with Beersadoo an attack on Davoreah's house, mainly to be avenged on Sreemutty, while the chief object with Beersadoo was to drive off eight head of cattle that belonged to Davoreah.

"That woman, Sreemutty, is a vixen," said Roopa, "and deserves to have her bones broken and her ears cropped."

"You are right," said Beersadoo, "and the cows of Davoreah Das are in splendid condition, and worth being lifted over the border."

The agreement being so hearty between them, no time was lost in carrying out the plan, and the house of Davoreah Das was attacked one midnight by a party of eight or ten men, all armed with Bhootea knives, and one of them carrying a lighted torch in his hand. Davoreah was at home, and had two able-bodied dependents with him; but these sneaked out of the house the moment they saw the odds against them, and the whole fight was left to Davoreah Das and his wife.

"What mean you, scoundrels?" exclaimed Davoreah Das, on perceiving Beersadoo and Roopa at the head of the dacoits; "what mean you by attacking the house of one who was your master, and always treated you with kindness?"

"*Was* and *is* are two different words, Davoreah Das," said Beersadoo. "We understand the customs of the country well. If you had retained us on your estate we would never have attacked your house nor offered any sort of violence to you. But now you are nothing to us but any other man;" and saying this he fell on Davoreah, and began to hack him with his Bhootea knife, in which he was zealously assisted by Roopa, while the other dacoits began to plunder the house.

Davoreah Das defended himself vigorously, but was no match for two. His wife hearing his cries came out to help him; but they had no arms to resist the knives of their assailants, and Roopa, seizing Sreemutty by the neck, beat her half dead. Further mischief was prevented by the other dacoits crying out that they had collected all the plunder and were about to decamp, when Beersadoo and Roopa also went off with them, sweeping out everything from the house, including the cattle which Beersadoo had coveted.

After the exit of the dacoits the neighbours of Davoreah entered the house and found him covered with wounds, and his wife also wounded in several places. Both Davoreah Das and his wife named Beersadoo and Roopa as having headed the dacoits, and told the same story to the police Jemadar and Daroga, when they came in; but Beersadoo alone was captured, the rest having crossed over to Bhootan. The difficulty with Beersadoo was that he could not drive the cattle across the border as easily as he had anticipated, and would not leave them behind him.

"You will get into a scrape, Beersadoo," said Roopa, "if you do not separate yourself from the cows for the present."

"I cannot do that, Roopa. I joined the enterprise only for the cows, and wont part with them on any account;" and the consequence was that he was easily traced and apprehended.

On the eighth day after the dacoity, Davoreah Das died of his wounds. Beersadoo was, therefore, tried for both dacoity and murder, and, being convicted, was capitally punished. Roopa corresponded with Sreemutty after this across the border.

"I promised to make you a widow, and have redeemed my promise. I can make you a wife again if you will have me in the place of the old man you have lost."

"Come to me, then, if you want to wed me," was the virago's reply; "I have still the old broom with me with which I thrashed you before."

LEAVES FROM LIFE.

BY LAUNCELOT CROSS.

NO. II.

A GARDEN AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

"With wandis long and small
Railed about."

James I. of Scotland.

"Contentment hath assurance for its dower,
Assurance brighter even than Hope's fair flower."

We may take the epilogue of our first chapter as a prologue to the second. Death is but a transition of life. We have now lost the vehement vitality of the year, but we still witness the beauty of the forces of nature, and find many funds of enjoyment. Our conclusion, therefore, was no dirge, but an epithalamium of the approaching marriage of new thoughts and new subjects. We do not divide the year, we continue the circle; and the brilliancy and joyousness which have been ours in the higher, golden half, cheer our steps into and beyond the darkness into which we now descend; whilst, as we shall see, in its innermost cloudy sanctuary there is a special glow and gleam of a new life.

In *October* our garden shows but the wreck of summer. We have sometimes come to it after a three months' stay in Scandinavia, and we feel the air laden with a lingering richness; the luxuriant life is not extinct, but it is torpid in tree, and bush, and flowers—the mass of bloom has disappeared, but leaves are thick and of a dim green, or taking to themselves rainbow colours. There is generally a moist mildness in the air, which drenches the whole garden as much as rain, and the token of the geniality of the season may be found in a stray primrose, illumining a recess beyond the ash tree, or the shades at the roots of the lilacs; in the heavy truss of a geranium, smouldering over the damp earth, looking more vivid than its predecessors; in the undimmed rays of a cluster of dahlias, and a penstemon proudly robust, raising its shrub-like branches and vermilion lanterns to light the months into the house of winter. If the day prove exceptionally warm, and we feel at noontide that the summer blaze is not yet quenched, we behold still the swift, the dazzling, mazy dance of insects in spheral, oval, and ever-changing form, now in tree, now o'er bush, and now high ascending into the clear air, and now swiftly descending on the few lingering flowers. Their superabounding life brings to

our reflection the fine fertility of our old parent earth, the vigorous vital action of our solar centre; and, if our thought would take shape for the comprehension of these tiny nations, we soon find it thrown back on the powers of imagination. Their productiveness alone swims like an infinity beyond the compass of our apprehension, and usurps the figures of the starry distances.

But whatever clime visits us this month, there are some things of which it does not deprive us, and may, indeed, in its severity, hasten. There is the hawthorn: we have memories of its silvery honours—these have been stripped from the hedge months ago, but the red fruit now gives a hue that charms the sombre colouring of the lane and meadow; and there is that little lattice nestler, with the sweetest notes of bird in sky or tree, the red-breast, sacred to the household gods. All seasons make it dear—if mild, we have a more copious song; if austere, then comes it nearer to the hearth—dearer to us for its trustfulness, dearer to us, like affection, from the very bitterness of adversity. But, alas! we have few birds, and instead of descanting at once and completely upon this feathered idol, we must let him come to our notice whenever he chooses to hop before our window, or startle us with a snatch of golden melody.

With *November* all summer experiences are being reversed: we are not so much out of doors, our observations have to be chiefly meteorological, stellar and of the calendar: we can rise late and yet be up with the sun and witness the unfolding of the gorgon tresses of the morn. Four years ago, until the middle of the month, we had wet and boisterous days. The fields became so thoroughly saturated that at last the rain remained on their surface, and the one in front of our house assumed the appearance of a lake. This we have not seen before nor since. It gave a novel aspect to the andscape, our desire of a lake residence was temporarily fulfilled, the blighting days, which so often tease our spirits, lost their baleful power, and we possessed for a while a Rydal Mere, nourished by the mountain rain, and clothed with grey mists that might have travelled from Helm Crag. A week later, and we had the first covering of snow; it was a thin sheet; winter was putting earth into short-clothes. After that, came a sharper and brighter time. In the following year, winter asserted her supremacy earlier. From the fifth to the twelfth of November was a week of continual snow. The latter day was a wild and stormy one, with a wind from the north-east. As for that evil blast, we cannot bless it—we cannot bring a benediction even to our lips—we must, we must leave its praise to Thomson, its choral hymn to the congenial harp of Kingsley. We went to matins on the twelfth, but it was impossible to venture out later in the day. Having had a long rude

reign, the weather ceased blustering, weeping, and shivering. Æolus went round by the south and sent Aonian gales. And—such is our fate in the northern corner—on the third Sunday we entered into a heavenly spring day. Our feelings were as exultant as though we heard, through the dark grating of the closing year, the larks singing at heaven's gate, and saw the corn in the ear. It was fifty degrees in the shade—doors and windows were thrown open to let the vernal influence visit every corner of our abode. We took tea early in the afternoon, and even then the sashes were thrown wide apart that we might be sensible to the sweet spirit of the summer in the moment of its very passing. The next November's first Sabbath experienced a tremendous southerly gale, as usual in these troublous days, prophesied with fatal precision from America. It came immediately after morning service, and raged the whole day. The preceding week was honoured with a dozen scarlet carnations, which swayed voluptuously in the caresses of the mild wind that preceded the hurricane. These soon vanished; but the bell-heather was in bloom, and suffered no injury from the violence of the tempest. Last November we had nothing beyond our customary limited floral display. By the end of the first week the days had shortened, so that we had no light on coming home by the five-o'clock train. On the tenth, at three quarters past four in the afternoon, the large full moon looked into our library through the bare branches of the chestnut. A strange spectral appearance did the backs of the volumes assume; rarely have they been so visited by glimpses of the moon; the gilding was silvered over, as with the pale cast of thought; and there was a sympathetic thrill in Chapman's Homer, in Keats' Endymion, in Sydney's Sonnet, where the immortal beauty of the moon lives in heavenliest of strains. Luna had not an untroubled reign: may be, indeed, she brought the storms that marred her own peaceful splendour. On the eleventh a terrible snow-fall took place. In the neighbourhood it was short, some say only an hour and a half, but it was more than a foot in depth. It was early morning when it fell, the world was wrapped in sleep, and the fleecy shower descended as silently as the shades of sleep. Not a slumberer was disturbed; and, when we awoke at the usual hour, behold a clear heaven and a new earth.

December.—Now are we entering into the very night of the year. The daughters of music are brought low; there is silence in field and grove; our songsters have to appear as humble voiceless pensioners, if we have them at all. The preparations for the following year have been going on in the garden. The undressing of nature has been noticeable everywhere. We may certainly have loitering penstemons undaunted by December's icy

breath; and chrysanthemums which nightly know Orion. But these preach stern injunctions that seem alien to fragile loveliness of the flowery race, and we rather turn for comfort and joy to the spirit breathed by the old religions into the month, making some of its days blossom as with heavenly fire. Christmas is a day that with us has had special observance. For more than twenty years we have sent forth a herald note to prepare its away, and make straight the paths for a welcome—for not less than the same time have we had a family gathering, when the holly leaf has gleamed and the red berry burned on the wall, and the honoured pudding smoked on the table. We shall speak particularly of this holy tide on another occasion. Our present purpose is not general, but specific. Five years ago Christmas day was snowy and the cold severe, which only made us keep our rooms closer. Upon that following, although one grand-parent of the family was there, we could not but feel a change to the eyes which the heart repelled. The wreath of children's faces round the board spoke of those not here, and advised us that we were in the presence of the generation which would push us from our seats. But the heart would cry, "As I treasure those absent, so may these spring children treasure you; so nought shall pass away, but the joys be stretched through many Christmas-tides, like the light of laughing flowers." We had in that year three months of dreary north-east winds and wet weather. By St. Thomas's day there was a change—it was brighter than any we had had for months; the days then became most beautiful, and Christmas was mild. The 26th was a warm spring day; there were actually buds on the rose and lilac bushes, and the everlasting peas sent up green sprouts. Christmas of the following year fell on Monday. The weather had been exceedingly genial, and continued so for a few days. The annual muster was as blythe as usual; there was accession to its roll, and hope had to yield large interest for any face that was missed. The last day of that year came in with a beautiful sunshine morning. The previous days had been dim and wet, and the dawning brightness was thus doubly cheerful. This was a very brief felicity. As we came from the morning service a terrific hurricane of wind and rain swept from the west. It seemed likely that the year would go out in darkness and fury. But towards evening the tumult abated and the sky cleared, and at midnight we stood beneath a glorious full moon, which shed its brilliancy on the skirts of the old and the front of the new year.

Our midnight position needs a few words of explanation. As the year is closing, from old observance in these northern parts, a warmer household time sets in, and the last hours and the first hours of the year are perhaps the most social in all its course.

Neighbours' houses are freely visited; and full of destiny is he who plants over the threshold the first foot of the year. The sanctity of this act is not to be subjected to alien opinions. A stranger amongst us wrote to a friend respecting the custom. In his haste he forgot to cross the *t* of the second word. His friend replied that it was a very singular thing to honour the "first fool." But whilst we relish the humour of the mistake, luscious as a drop of liqueur, we care not to subject such sacred rites to the remarks of the ignorant or the unsympathetic. To us they are dear from our earliest recollections, and will be to our last; and that is why we stood beneath the keen full moon on the passing of the year, four years ago, to hear the gospel bells announcing the arrival of its successor, and to follow the first foot into our home.

Two years ago the first Sunday in December was the first in Advent. The day was as lovely as one in April unwet by a tear. The last carnations were still ardent, and the chrysanthemums at the window proclaimed Aristotle's leading principle of poetry, three in one. That was, indeed, one of the most genial of winters. The Advent Sunday was true to its trust. The last was balmy, and the day preceding Christmas gave us a clear, soft morning. At noon there was a sudden change. We had a few hours of driving snow. The weather cleared again,—again to be overcast. A terrific snow-hurricane dashed down from the north, extinguishing all the mildness that had loitered through the month; but it gave to all the true mid-winter desire, and whitened fields for Christmas-day. The storm expended itself, and the air became keen and bright. On Christmas Eve we usually go to the town and see the merry bustle of the shops and streets. When we made our excursion in that year the evening star was inclining to the west, and it looked larger and more lustrous than any star we have beheld except the Jupiter of 1867 and the Hesperus of 1864. It was a very frosty night; towards midnight the yule-log was put on the fire, and with the household healths was combined a Swedish *skal* for those who keep English merry-making in the heart of the long winter of the upper portion of the Bothnian Gulf.

Clear, sharp days succeeded, and the nights continued to be illumined by the the loveliest of evening stars. On Friday a change set in, the hopes of the skaters which were just about to be realised were destroyed, rain came and drenched the last trailing garments of the year.

Never has there been a more severe December in these parts than that we have recently left. On the eighth there had been a heavy snow-fall all through the previous night. Silently winnowed through the fields of space, not disturbing the sleepers in its descent, when we looked forth in the morning the branches of the large

trees were covered with a silvery moss, amongst the thickly interlaced twigs of the bushes the snow formed graceful, sparkling wreaths and festoons, and between the more delicate sprays lay like cotton bloom. The fall recommenced, but finally yielded to an intense frost, which bound up lake, pond, and runnel, and kept the country white for Christmas-tide. The halcyon days that precede and succeed that of St. Thomas never gave mortal a keener relish for what is peaceful and comfortable. But Christmas never was unwelcome in glittering robes of snow and ice, and little is it blessed when it is green. The heart is a Glastonbury thorn, which will produce its fairest blossoms amidst coldest trials, and particularly at this legendary and ever-miraculous season. We had our all-hail congratulations as usual. And if in the Roman saturnalia the youngest child put in the scarlet-berried twig into the smoking pudding on this day, it is not our fault if, in somewhat following that antique custom, we deemed we acted after Christian precedent, even as we were moved by a Christian spirit. *Ignorantia facti excusat:* which Latin means that we shall without doubt incriminate ourselves on the first feasible Christmas. On the following day we wrote some of these our notes under the shadow of the Christmas-tree. The weather had relaxed, and the stone walls and stone-built houses assumed the most singular appearance. Rustics explained that the thaw brought the frost out of the stone. All the front of stone-work was covered with long, white, hairy mossiness, which gave it the appearance of white marble. Walls were like resplendent works of art, the barn was a palace, and the mansion a temple of alabaster. But winter soon resumed its rigid sovereignty, and rebound the stream and whitened the plain.

Jan.—The opening-day of the year is an immemorial holiday in our district. The Old always has had cares; for the existence of humanity it is necessary that the New should have hope. The year is hallowed by a strange solemnity in its last days; it waits, like St. Simeon, for the coming salvation, and when it has departed in peace, we trust its expectation has been met, that the blessing is with us, or that we have got to the year-street in which it is, and are stepping towards it with no tardy feet. For these, or other reasons, the birthday of the year is held with little less celebration than the day of Christ's Mass. We have now few signs of life in our garden: the scaffolding of all the summer show is perfect, the skeleton which can be easily clothed upon, and that is nearly all we can say. Brown earth, brown trunks, and branches and twigs, the oppressed grass of the borders, sproutings of green over the soil, a promise we dare not greet, for we know the time of life has not yet come—this is all that we look upon on the mildest of days. Warmer counties have the crocus in this month,

but we know not its honours until many weeks later. We console ourselves, however, with the knowledge of more frigid climes. Friends we have who are sealed up in six months' ice; and we can bear our winter-trial at least more gratefully by thinking of the frosty Caucasus. If, however, wanting in flowers, we are not without an occasional wonderful efflorescence, more startling, more fleeting than the children of the summer grove. Specially so was the New Year's Day of 1875. If the Bower of Bliss, or the Gardens of Armida, could really come before the eye of man in travelling through a withered land under a sombre, unsmiling sky, they would not more surprise and enchant than did our garden on that rememberable morn. Of course, it was the effect of hoar frost. Snow had fallen two days before, and lay chill and white. In the quiet night came the ministry of the frost. It tricked out every branch and spray, and blade of grass with crystalline lacework—every stone was jewelled—the wooden gate and railings were transformed into miracles of rare device—the tall, straggling hawthorn hedge was the silver network of a shrine. The fairy beauty faded not whilst we looked, the air was still, and until noon we could examine every sprig, and consider the whole scene from all points of observation. It was not our garden. It was something that came and departed; we can scarcely bring our minds to think that the bare outworks of tree and bush can be the twofold medium of making our little domain a scene of enchantment. That glittering scene appears as supernatural—as much a fabric of the imagination—as the vision of Kubla Khan. Nature's calendar seemed closed; and lo! she opened for a few brief hours a leaf more magical and entrancing than all she had shown in the volume of the whole of a long year.

The change that followed was scarcely less astonishing. At noon there was a sudden shaking wind, which settled into a continuous gale, and ere the day closed, without the falling of a flake, railways were stopped, and every highway choked with the drifted snow.

The succeeding New Year's day came in as soft as spring. The air was balmy, the heavens were bright. Next day was Sunday, and on the bosom of that eve the New Year sailed in, fair and sweet, on the crescent bark of the young moon. It was a great contrast to the previous year, and also to the present. The month has much of this variety. Snow and frost give their peculiar beauty to the garden, the landscape, and our chamber-windows; the heavens show their sparkling hosts vividly, they will not be denied; we may refuse to raise our heads to observe the revolutions of the Great Bear round the central star of the nations, and cast but a negligent glance at the Pleaides, but the mightiest of the

constellations confronts us whenever we go out of doors or look from the windows, the starry skeleton of space, Orion, hungry for the morn; and Sirius luridly glares upon us, like the eye of infinity. We note the lengthening of the days which give so much more light to life; we can at rare times resign ourselves to the ecstatic calm when the full moon and the beams of the departing day blend their light, and make that inexpressible silvery wide-spread gleam, stealing shadows from everything, and full of repose; and our final happiness is attained about the twenty-fourth of the month, when we can reach home by daylight at half-past five o'clock, and feel that the bands of winter's darkness are now fairly broken.

February.—This is the month in which we begin to feel most heavily the long brooding of the dim, cold days. Three years ago it was the end of the month before we experienced lightsome joyousness, and the ice-crust of winter's sadness was thawed in our bosoms. Then the crocusses began to appear—the earth blossomed gold—the garden became glad, and so did we. But, in spite of any backwardness in the season, February generally has its coronal. There will be days filled with summer's breath, and joy makes itself vocal. We remember, many years ago, that the wintry time was long and bitter, and about the closing of the month we heard the song of a bird not familiar to this particular spot. Our emotions were unspeakable. Its thrilling, changing, molten golden notes, coming whilst the lark still lay silent under the sod, and all other music was stilled as though in death, sounded like the rapt music of another state of being dawning upon earth. We were told that it was a stray bull-finch, but whence it came no one could explain any more than the pathway of their own souls from the heavens. But to us this was more than a bird's song. It was a snatch from the eternal melodies, and it wrought a new ecstacy whenever it entered our ears. On leaving home in the morning the song would drop down upon us from the bare branches of a tree hanging over the small ragged garden where the bird sheltered, and then we felt travelling with Christian towards the Delectable Mountains, instead of going to Vanity Fair. In the evening it was an orb of the great universe of song: a prelude to the spheral harmonies, which at that hour were sending their first notes through the darkening deeps. It was the blossoming of the Holy Music that whispers through the air and the far eternities of space, just as the star is the blossoming of the Holy Light that slumbers in the darkness, and the flower is the blossoming of the Holy Life that darkly moves in the ground.

It was music's self we heard. Few have been such visitations Let us therefore mention two. One was brought by Picco, when, for the second time, we heard him play the Carnival of Venice; the

other occurred in the conclusion of *Il Trovatore*, when Trebelli Bettini began "Home to our mountains," from an almost unobserved position at the back of the stage; it seemed the voice of a waterfall calling from its leafy cover. The words were lost. They were needless; they would first have distorted and then destroyed the spell. As it was, the spell was increased with each note, until we really listened to the Spirit of Music which had inspired Verdi, and its perfect vocalisation was consentaneous with the thunder-melodies of the starry systems over us. Beautiful beyond expression is song without words. It takes us to a higher existence when it becomes our guest, it dwells with us for ever with sweet, abiding memories, and at a note it awakens in moments of care or folly, and bears us away again on the seraph wings of ecstacy. And do we not feel it as a visible presence; do we not at times feel that the language of poetry is but that of soberness and truth; that our eyes do catch "the music breathing from the face," and that truly in some other we behold the beauty has been born of murmuring sound?

Such thoughts, and more, swam on the stray notes of this golden bird. It aroused impulses, too, which the season forbade to cherish. We could not go forth into any of our denes to hear the full-voiced choirs of which this seems but a stray vocalist; but the season's limitations were vain,—the notes allied to the spirit of music itself recalled strains and incidents, sweet and immortal, and ever ready for human ears.

Goethe was sensible of the power of the music to express the best and loftiest sentiments of man, and to impress us with a sense of our resemblance to the Deity. One of his characters, who could not exist without music, concealed the chorus with tapestry, and delighted to listen to music with closed eyes, that his whole being might be concentrated on the one pure enjoyment of the ear.

Emerson whispers, "What private heavens can we not open by yielding to all suggestion of rich music?" which thought probably rose like an exhalation on reading the passage or music in De Quincey's "Opium Eater," or Lamb's "Chapter on Ears." But the power of music has been greater than fabled by poets, or pictured in day-dreams of our most imaginative essayists. The pirate in the midst of his career hears the cooing of the Zenaida dove, 'the only soothing sounds he ever heard during his life of horrors," and through these plaintive notes alone is brought to pour out his soul in penitence at the great Father's feet, and flies from his companions and returns to his home-life. The Indian girl hears the lute of her lover on the hill—danger, remorse are before her, nay, a repugnance to the man, but the voice of reason, the instinct of self-preservation are overwhelmed by the billows of silvery sound, and she wanders forth to find the sweet and deadly source. But

the most exalted instances wait on the demand of memory. Elisha's anger towards the king discomposes him so much that he could not pray, nor inquire of the Lord, as, says the most musical of our divines, "till by rest and music he had gathered himself into the evenness of a dispassionate and recollected mind." Zwingle recalls to Faber that the music of David's harp chased the malignant spirit away from Paul, and continues, "Ah, if you knew the sound of the celestial lute, the evil spirit of ambition and love of riches which possesses you would also come out of your heart." Luther, in the mid-most struggles of his soul, found on the floor of his cell deprived of his senses, and exhibiting no symptoms of life, after restoratives are tried in vain, resists all efforts to restore his faculties until boys are brought to sing a sweet hymn, and by that means alone he recovers his strength, his senses, his life.

Such were some of the recollections and suggestions that floated on the spring melody of the bird. Yet all seem as a mere stone's throw compared with the flight of an angel in the hearing of Sir Thomas Browne's affirmation in regard to mere vulgar tavern musick—that "there is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an hierogyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God."

But we break the silver chain: suspend the melodies of memory. The winter of 1877 was exceptionally free from snow and ice,—rain there was, and wind and continued mildness. In February this genial weather continued, until on the third Sabbath we had a glorious day, full of the spring-time. There were buds on the trees; some of the rose bushes were actually in leaf. The yellow crocusses appeared profuse, but not full-blown, still wanting the full rays of the sun; wallflowers blossomed; spikes of daffodils and other flowers were shooting up sharp and green through the jetty earth; little companies of sparrows were merry-making—chirping, fluttering, fighting amongst the branches of the trees, on the gravel path, through the bushes, under the eaves. Night and morning we had the thrushes' song,—we thought we had had a surfeit of love's food, yet these strains came as heart-refreshing to us as to

> "Travellers in some shady haunt
> Among Arabian sands."

During the following week the weather continued balmy, with a prevailing wind. Then we get snowdrops, and the blue scilla, and the lilac's green buds were nearly burst. In a neighbouring well-sheltered garden we saw the mezereon's pink blossoms, come before its leaves, and yellow jasmine on a southern wall. The eyes look anxiously for pleasant objects; they are hungry for new varieties of beauty after the long winter dearth. We note the rooks building in the lofty trees; we enter a friend's hot-house

to view the peach blossom; we search for nature's loveliness in the internal bloom of tulip, the red-ripe camelia, and the graceful yellow acacia. On the morning after these observations we lament. We have been deceived. Spring is not here. During the night there has been a thievish frost of twelve degrees; the green hope of the month is pilfered from us,—winter descends. The following day, Tuesday, was biting cold. The night was clear, it was a glittering steel-ice night; an eclipse of the moon was sparklingly noticeable. On Wednesday there was skating; and thus, as it generally is with us, the blooming creation was delayed.

Last year the winter was not quite so mild as its predecessor, but the weather steadied during February. For the whole of the first week the aneroid was immoveable; on the fourth Friday we heard the lark's song as we walked up the long lane to the town in the morning. All our birds, indeed, were with us. The thrush sang in the willow with early dawn, and the red-breast warbled on the apple-tree. We had but a scanty show of flowers—and proudest were we of our heath which opened its bells. Indoors we were not wanting in the water-feeding hyacinths, with roots of splendour, and flowers of mystery and glory.

So goes the wayward time—and now we reach *March*—the month racked and torn by all the throes of spring, a month full of records. We note in years long past that it brought the crocus, the heath, the daffodil, and the small blue hyacinthine, Scilla Siberica.

In a nearer year March came in gentle and pure as Una's milk-white lamb, but ere half the month's days were spent winter smote her with the north-east wind, and put his shroud upon her. The daffodils hung their heads, weakened by the chill blasts. Yet the green cones of coming plants and flowers still peeped cheerily from the ground, and the heath held out its brave purple.

Three years ago we observed that on the first day our yellow crocusses came into full bloom. These are invariably destroyed by the sparrows, a fact not yet accounted for by scientific observers. Then, too, on Heaton railway bank we saw the copious buttercup-looking coltsfoot. It was a genial spring-time. A week later the battalions of the purple crocus appeared in perfection. After that we fell into a state of indisposition. We could not look abroad, and knew scarcely more of the month than that on its last day there was a thunderstorm, which sounded to our ears like the tolling of the great bells of the universe. In the next year it was affirmed that, during the night between the twenty-eight of February and the first of March, the thermometer registered a greater degree of cold than has been known in these parts for sixteen years, which means since our river was frozen over at the town on the first of

the year. So fierce may be the vicissitudes of our weather. Thus, again, the temperature almost immediately moderated. We had sunshine and sweet airs. Four days after we remarked that the first yellow crocusses had been pecked to pieces by the sparrows, for the luxury of taste, or from annoyance to their vision; but for all that we had a fine display on the first Sabbath, the main body of the golden army coming forth at once, varied here and there by sheaves of puce and white. The earth was now bursting with green life: ruddy spikes of the peony had shot two inches from the ground: thousands of the lances of daffodils and gladioli pierced the dark soil: the mosses shone with a brighter emerald, and the periwinkle leaf had a keener gloss, whilst its flower here and there sparkled keenly blue, like Sirius in December. More flowers we could not ask for, the rapture of the spring moment was all-sufficing. Five days subsequent to this all was quieted in wintry bonds; cold and snow returned, and the ardour in nature and the spirit were quenched. Strong frosts set in, the nights especially were bitter, and seared all the early green. Ponds were covered with ice. This the sun in his gathering strength soon dissolved; but winter's fang slowly and reluctantly relaxed its hold. On the twenty-second we had a fall of snow; in the afternoon we had thunder and lightning; the fall continued afterwards, and our garden was as beautiful with snow-foliage as when clothed with hoar frost on the New Year's day of 1875. Three years after we had another severe snow-storm, accompanied with thunder and lightning. We had, then, a respite, and on the twenty-eighth, in walking home, we heard the first song of the lark. Next day we left for a border village where we had to spend Easter-tide, and the lark's song was common, also that of the curlew. On the Friday of the Crucifixion the heavens were musical with them, as though they rejoiced in the blessing that arose from earth.

Now we know that all our observations are belated, out of joint; our data imperfect, as though we inhabited a clime on the borders of chaos, not belonging to the arctic or the temperate region, but cursed and blessed in turn, now visited by airs from a heavenly, and now by blasts from some other zone. But, if we get some of nature's nourishment, we are contented with it; and we do not ask for the pity which we do not give ourselves. A simple instance, as we make the final arc completing the circle of the year, of our manner of drawing sustenance from our extremes, will show that we have pleasure in the process. If it were not so, we should indifferently let winds roll and suns shine without a thought beyond the adding of a top-coat, and the praise of a wafted perfume. We do not follow the matter too mechanically, by which all attraction is worn from flower, hill, lake, mountain, and star. We write but

when we feel disposed to do so,—and we have Goethe's sovereign prescription for such practice; we wait upon the ministration of a new scene with a patient and receptive spirit; it is not, therefore, likely that we make our service in the garden a formal, fearful, and perfunctory thing. No, it never is to us aught but a voluntary one, and our records flow from the exuberance of our experience.

March 3rd.—The whole of the month's opening days full of rapturous spring, each minute sweeter than before. To-day we see the golden spikes of the crocusses in their green sheaths; coltsfoot, on the railway bank, in bloom; snowdrops, like winter's last pledge. Every day is vocal with the song of the thrush, the redbreast, and the lark.

March 10th.—During this week we saw the white and purple crocusses in perfect bloom together. On Thursday night there was a pang of frost, ice in the cart rails; but this passed without injury to the frailest show of garden life. Strong winds swept from the north; still all went gaily. Birds' songs thicken. We picked a small bunch of wall-flowers, and mixed them with a few crimson daisies, like hearts of spring. It is a time of sweet surprises! This tenth of March the heath blooms in several bushes, the stems of the everlasting peas are a foot high, every tree—elder, willow, lilac,—is thick with green buds. In other years we look for one or other spectacles, and may miss what we look for; but in its place we find some other green marvel, and so we are not disappointed in seeking, for even what we miss we know is not dead, but sleepeth only—it, too, will arise and speak to our hearts. But this year spring seems coming in like a flood.

March 24th.—Vilest of necromancy. Aged heads vowed they never saw such an early spring. So late as the twentieth was this spoken. Each day more beauteous than the last—lark, thrush, and redbreast rejoicing—thankful even were the sparrows—of which the adjacent farmyard always affords us a supply. The garden was veiled in green, budding were the elder trees, laburnum, lilacs, crab trees, rose bushes, and the high-shot everlasting peas, with half burst leaf buds, gave their spaces a transparent trembling emerald hue. A daffodil full-blown shone as a golden star, as if to proclaim that the day-spring from on high had made the season its own. The tulips were pouting with half burst crimson and golden leaves, the heath lay like a purple cloud on its bed, the flowering currant showed the sparks of its crimson fire in a never-falling shower. The periwinkle gleamed like a sapphire amidst the rockery, and its own trailing green leaves. The primrose glowed with phosphorescent gleam in the shadow of the bushes. Then all was changed. The hurricane descended in which the "Eurydice" was lost. Storms of snow succeeded, ice in the

ponds and in bowls three inches thick. The daffodils became heavily borne down by the winter's burthen, and the promise of the year faded.

March 31*st.*—A week's period does not alter this amazing time. From the edge of summer, where we looked to be at this date, we are hurled back into mid-winter. Storm upon storm has swept over us. One fall covered the earth three inches, although it yielded soon to the sun's power. To-day at half past eight o'clock a gentle fall began, no wind, the snow clouds so dense and general that the sun was neither seen or felt any more than in deep winter. Down came the snow during all the morning, unmitigated as though in December. On coming from church, hedges, trees, and all, were all-beauteous, as though in a bridal dress for spousals with the hot amourist summer. The hedges snow-blossomed like holts of deutschia; the lilac bushes were filled as with downy balls of the cotton plant. The birds' songs are silenced, the veil of green is gone and all the rich hues. Still overladen are the budding daffodils. And yet—a rolling away of the clouds—a warm breath from the blue heavens, and the snow will fade like a vapour of the morning—and that daffodil star, faithful herald still, will lift up its head, radiant against the black earth—the Hesperus of Spring.

The prophecy is true—they come, they come,—the days of Spring we have so long missed! Their march is confirmed; each morning of pure, now purer, air to the heart inspires vernal delight of joy, able to drive all sadness but despair.

But we have not saddened at the long delay. We turn to winter with a glad remembrance as we leave it behind. We always saw something green in the garden, although the gay flowers were gone, and the trees were reft of their apparel, except when the frosty weather gave us winter's trappings of silver and glittering groves. Those special hours are, indeed, most beautiful when the trees are tricked out with silent splendours, which the slightest movement will destroy, and a warm breath dissolve into tears; there is a strange serenity in beholding the snow from a dense cloud, winnowed in the fields of space, falling on landscape and garden, changing the features of the whole scene, and clothing it in argent pomp; but wild are those periods when the wind rises after such a time and carries the snow like smoke across the fields and along the roads: and, oh, these biting days, when frost performs the effect of heat, and the roads are dusty as in June! Nor can we forget, amidst summer's immitigable light, the mid-winter nights when the seven-fold heavens unfold their gates. We cannot then go to our porch if the night be clear, but we behold the glittering Orion pursuing his shadowy chase through the asphodel meads

of the stars,—Orion, that has inspired a living poet, and so become one of the greatest subjects of modern song ; and we have in our ears the sonorous lines of antiquity :

"Orion's beams ! Orion's beams !
His star-gemmed belt and shining blade,
His isles of light, his silvery streams
And gloomy gulfs of mystic shade."

These nightly scenes are illumined, too, by the silver changes of the moon sailing through all the galaxies. Nor can even the saddest time defraud us of pleasnre. The short days enable us for weeks together to see the rosy garlands spread before the late rising sun. And when we hear the chill dirges of the wind, and the branches moan as if disconsolate ; when the months are in their dreariest throes, when the flowers of the garden gone, we gather flowers of the soul. It is then the time for reading and study, as was the rich experiences of the golden minds of Milton and Goethe.

The prophecy is true. March has gone.

"'Tis the month before the month of May,
And Spring comes slowly up this way."

Yes, it comes, it comes ; Spring and its inspiration ! We vow Pythagoras was right in maintaining it to be the loveliest and the healthiest season, because light and darkness, moisture and dryness are now on a level. But putting all reason aside, nothing can withstand the assertion of its prerogative by its own vehement breath ; our tingling blood eloquently affirms it, and the brightened intellect. The quickening hope, the freshening glee, forerunning the expected power, silence all arguments for other seasons. Gone is the frosty ache of winter. Approaches the time when birds and poets are jubilant to excel each other in musical delight towards what they love best ; when we get flowers before we have a leaf or blossom ; when we have accessions of sweet weather which make us forget there has been a season of dimming snow and rain, and affronting darkness, nay, the dreariest weeks seem to have been but a sweet vexation and times of replenishment ; when nature's afflatus is abroad, and we are not the dull things we were yesterday ; the spirit has leapt from the crypt of winter, the grave-cloths fall off, we are free, our thoughts have wings, they are away high up in the blue. That time is at hand ; we have its pledge in the faded snowdrop, in that rose the prime of all, the prime-rose, in the lilac flame of the crocus sheaves, in that canonised shy beauty the violet, viola bicolor, herb of Trinity Rogation flower. Aye, and in that northern household recess of Gloriana, which forms part of our natural delight, the ferns are there throwing up their crozier fronds, and will soon make the window a bower.

The ecstatic Spring, advancing still, soon reconciles all the place with green; there is a luxury of emotion in a million leaves, untouched as yet by the corroding acid fumes; the Siberian crab trees, certainly, are slow in showing leaf, but they progress to full silver blossom until they stand like two gleaming angels—Sandalphion and Abdiel, the angels of the nativity. Then come the glances of the warm sunbeams, which steal over field, mead, and garden with tender glorification; the haze of green on bush and trees has developed into an emerald mass, colours kindle in every corner, there are iufluent odours which rise and fall like the rythm of Coleridge; then comes the rose, of loveliest promise when reddening where the calyx splits, its consummate flower dedicated to Harpocrates the god of silence—and, how much that is whispered under it when throned in wreath, or on the maiden's breast, let its deep carmine declare; and supreme o'er all joys, the sevenfold peace and bliss of the Sabbath, when we can leisurely survey our garden at all hours, and feel it is nought less than Paradise regained.

The year revolves! Spring deepens into Summer, and we have moments—nay, hours—sweeter than morning dreams. We have foregone the presentations of the stars in the night of the year; our garden has ceased to be an observatory; but what calm rapture there is in looking out at early dawn, when the pulse of life is still and each house is a sarcophagus. The gentle breath that then steals through the air is from the land of soul; we feel the spiritual tenderness of the meek light; it seems the hour of nature's pontifical solemnities—the flowers, each with a pearly diadem, bends in adoration towards the east, and the supreme mitred iris is high priest. Gradually there flows a fuller effulgence from the altar of the sun, the world bestirs itself, and devotion and labour blend their services.

Summer tends to Autumn! And never at these seasons does a day pass without our coming upon a flower and finding therein an old delight, and we may light upon a new name and be visited by a new emotion. There are times when fancy plays more tricks than we have alluded to, or we can name, and then we feel the flowers to be many things; we see Iris-woof cast along the jetty earth; we see in the flowers flying flames caught for a day, and, anon, feel them to be apparitions of beauty from another world, and, on a turn, they are incarnations of heavenliest emotions and thoughts: they are in turn daughters of the spring, children of the summer, autumn's rich-breathing, lusty, radiant retinue—vestals of the shade are some, and some bold progeny of the sun, and all shadows of the glories to come.

These are some of our pleasures as the seasons roll; but much must be left unsaid. Our garden brings to us much of the country

that we cannot visit. Within its circuit there is none of the arrogance of flowers praised in shows and raised in nooks of tropical heat, but, nevertheless, to our frugal spirit June never comes without a freight of beauty, ncr August without a rich abandonment of colour and perfume. In April we can be visited by winter from the hills, but no inclemency has bereft us of plenteousness in the harvest of flowers. Milton, with fine sagacity, makes his Genius of the Grove listen, in the deep of night, to the music of the spheres, since the openness of aspect obtained by a garden makes its owner an observer of the stars, and to him the variety of weather is significant only in a secondary degree to its play amongst the mountains, and his to note are the clouds with all their chambers of imagery, wherein the spirit of man has made his gods and worshipped from ancient days. But the gods of the clouds and of the grove have been long deposed. In natural sights religion and poetry have been renovated; a new kingdom has descended from the heavens and made nature a divine thing to man's apprehension. Ruskin finds the first awakening whisper in Dante; but Swedenborg speaks oracularly as the seer of the church of churches. This matter has illustration close at hand. The natural love of Eve was strong, just as strong of course, as the love of her creator Milton; but she has no spiritual sight; in leaving Paradise she weeps over her flowers, and the tender attention she gave to them, and will give no more; but her tears are such as mortals, not such as angels weep. In the light of the second dawn of revelation there's

> "Not a natural flower can grow on earth,
> Without a flower upon the spiritual side,
> Substantial, archetypal, all a-glow
> With blossoming causes,—not so far away,
> That we, whose spirit-sense is somewhat cleared,
> May not catch something of the bloom and breath."

There is, then, no invocation needed in the garden now. We require no muse, since divinity itself is here. We can follow the flowers into the abyss of light into which they have flown, and never lose their immortal hues and aroma; whilst, at the same time, we need not forego a single natural enjoyment in the product of the frank rain-showers, in the refreshment that we meet at the gate in the dash of dawn-dew from the laburnum, and in the sparkling drop in the eye of flower retired from noontide heat, sweet and pathetic as a tear of Griselda.

And then Autumn droops! We once more know winter's grey light, its midmost holy day when light blossoms and a glory shines suddenly round our homes, and we rise thence on increasing days, and come to the very day on which we write.

Can it be said that these our joys are little joys, gathered from and expended on little things? Nay, by the proud reverence of Chaucer for the daisy, common and deathless flower, the star of all the year, it is not so! By all the poets who have ever loved flowers, not for special rarity or stately growth, but as they loved the wide mass of humanity, as flowers, it is not so! Nay, it is quite otherwise. Herein lies something pure and sacred. Here we fraternise not with any meanness, vice, or foul passion. Flower affection has in it no alloy—it is mixed with no debasing motive. The flowers correspond with the affections of the spirit. Has not the Holy One of Bethlehem spoken to us in flowers; their fragrance and light were in his life, they brightened in his words. The genius of the wood in *Arcades* speaks of the place as hallowed ground, but all the power of poetry with puissant words and murmurs made to bless gives not any such sanctity to the leafy precincts as the love and associations of the Lord Christ. In His mighty agony He sought the sweet solitude of Gethsemane's garden, and in a garden was His sepulchre—no wonder that each flower is full of His love and His divinity.

But we bate our breath on the all-sacred reference we have been led to make, and conclude with the ever-present reflection that in our garden we are *en rapport* with all minds that have had a love for gardens and their tenants, and the feelings of such are ever fresh, and will extend the bounds of our information from year to year through life.

Some of them detect subtle analogies—hints, links, and, echoes throughout all nature's realm. Bacon declared that "the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (when it comes and goes, like the warbling of music) than in the hand." That same association is exactly reversed in *Twelfth Night*, where the strain of music comes over Duke Orsino's ear—

> "Like the sweet south
> That breathes upon a bank of violets
> Stealing and giving odours."

Hunt never heard one of Spofforth's airs, but the passage of Bacon came into his memory like a breath of music. Coleridge wonders at the growth of a flower, and murmurs like the voice of mystery itself—"Lo! at the touch of light how it returns an air akin to light." Beneath the note of such lofty suggestiveness we have the multitude of homely voices which let us into the choice of their own hearts whilst they touch our own,—as when we catch the affection of Elizabeth Barrett Browning for the verbena by her repeated reference to it.

> "Verbena strains
> The point of passionate fragrance;"

and then more autobiographically—

> "Sweet Verbena, which, being brushed against,
> Will hold you three hours after by the smell,
> In spite of long walks on the windy hills."

As, also, when Wordsworth augustly speaks of the flowers on his walks, such as the lesser Celandine, wherein so much gladness he gathered, also solemn thought, when in showed withered and changed of hue—

> "This neither is its courage nor its choice,
> But its necessity in being old."

But there is a never-ceasing choral song from the bards, on which we here cannot linger; the strains will come to us in our fittest moods in the enclosure of the garden from Spencer's praise of "roses raigning in the pride of May," to Withers's Muse, and Burns's affection for the gowan.

The garden, too, has had its philosophers. They have been made a genealogical jest in literature, but not a true one. That pleasure is the chief good, is their great doctrine. Is it not also that of Christianity? Let us not falsely condemn those who come eating and drinking. True pleasure hath its own interpretation. These garden-philosophers "were content with a small cup of light wine, and all the rest of their drink was water," and put a frugal inscription over the garden. Zeno did doubt, and left doubt itself a doubt. Epicurus held the golden scales. He used the expression, "waiting.'. Not too eager to speak, never to give an opinion, but asserting reason's godlike power to pronounce when the evidence of a thing was obtained. We think he must have learned this method from the flowers, not venturing to say that there is a rose until the leaf had formed, the bud developed, and the full perfect blossom was dispread before the eye. When we hear him discoursing of philosophy as to be studied when a man is old and young, in the latter case, in order that he may be, at the same time, both young and old, in the former that he may be always young in good things—when he inculcates that to live well is identical with the case to die well—that those men enjoy luxury most completely who are best able to do without it—when he explains his doctrine not as referring to sensual pleasures, but the freedom of the body from pain "and of the soul from confusion;" yet even with regard to bodily discomfort explaining away all misinterpretation, by asserting that "long diseases have in them more that is pleasant than painful to the flesh," and that virtue is inseparably allied to enjoyment; when we behold him utterly subduing the vulgar slavish fear of death, and when the great change comes writing a letter commencing—"We have written this letter

to you on a happy day for us, which is also the last of our life!"— when we learn all this, we are proud of the beauty and solace of these flowers of thought, and feel how sweet are the words of the philosophers as well as those of the singers when in the green and gay domain. Joy of soul can never pass from the humblest garden.

Such, and more, is our Garden to us

TO A FROZEN WATER-COURSE.

Some souls, beneath the grip of misery
Grow stiff, and turn to icicles, like thee;
Others, like mighty rivers, or the sea,
Send patient shoulders to that tyranny,
Yet keep the life-blood of the heart as free
As in the high noon of prosperity.
So brave, so true, so warm with energy,
My God, such would I be!

E. G.

PERSONALITIES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

XXXI.

MR. GRANT DUFF.

When Mr. Gladstone formed his ministry in 1868 he appointed the Duke of Argyll Secretary of State for India, and Mr. Grant Duff Under Secretary. In the mere matter of external appearance there was an obvious and amusing, though, of course, quite accidental propriety in thus associating these two gentlemen in the same department of Government. The Duke of Argyll is a short, reddish-haired Scotchman—so is Mr. Grant Duff. The general physical resemblance, indeed, between the two, as illustrative of a certain type of Scotchman, is almost striking. But the similarity does not end there. They both bear about with them the self-same unmistakeable air of the born official, delighting, nay revelling, in the exercise of official work for its own sake. The Duke always has a look about him which irresistibly suggests that he finds official business to be as much his natural element as a duck finds water to be hers, and that blue books are merely his "light reading;" and the same may be said of Mr. Grant Duff. Moreover, there is a remarkable intellectual resemblance between the two men. Both are more *savants* than statesmen; and in Mr. Duff's case, at any rate, there is also a distinct affinity with that prig tribe of which we lately cited some samples. Something of that small self-conceit, of that petty self-satisfaction, of that general dwarfishness of the spiritual being, which proclaims the genuine prig, unhappily pervades the individuality of the member for the Elgin Burghs. Only a short time ago he made a speech in which he declared that the destinies of our colonies at the present time were pretty much in the hands of Lord Cranbrook, Colonel Stanley, and Sir M. Hicks-Beach—"three gentlemen who were not distinguished by any remarkable ability." Considering that Mr. Grant Duff has only once in his life been a member of any administration at all, and then only an under secretary, it could only have been the fatal vice of priggism which could have prompted such a small and gratuitous sneer at three political opponents who are as unquestionably regarded by Parliament as statesmen *above* the average of ability as they undoubtedly are the intellectual superiors of the member for Elgin. This little demonstration of Mr. Duff's was quite on a par with Mr. Tre-

velyan's conceited chatter about the sons of ministers being all dunces. Indications, too, of that petty, restless vanity, and absorbing egotism which are so commonly associated with minds of the *doctrinaire* order, are not wanting in the honorable gentleman's personality. He dabbles in foreign politics, in which he believes himself a perfect expert, and his wonderful revelations as to the confidences which European potentates have reposed in him have provided food for many a bantering article in various organs of public opinion. He is fond, at the end of the Parliamentary Session, of taking trips through Europe or to America; and when he pays his periodical visit to his Scottish constituents, he has always a marvellous story to tell them, which, in its way, is really a charming historical romance. It is in the highest degree edifying to notice how the simple folk of Elgin hang, with bated breath, on the oracular periods of the dainty, fastidious-minded, and nicely-critical little gentleman who condescends to represent and instruct them. When he tells them those exciting stories about the private interviews he has had with Bismarck and Andrassy, and the Russian Emperor, and warns them not to put any trust in the Government's declarations on foreign policy, because the information which he himself has obtained through the said interviews is infinitely more authentic and reliable—when they hear all this, how proud they must feel of their statesmanlike member, and what a perpetual puzzle it must be to them how Mr. Gladstone should have shown himself so wanting in discrimination as to have made Mr. Grant Duff only Under Secretary for India in place of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs! One autumn the honourable member saw fit "to do" India, and, of course, the moment he returned he hastened to present the rich fruits of his observations of that vast British dependency to an expectant public through the medium of a widely-circulated periodical. What Mr. Grant Duff thought about our Indian Empire, after having viewed it with his bodily eyes, was naturally of much importance to an eager nation! Besides, there were the usual thrilling stories; from a political point of view, almost as wondrous and captivating as Othello's narrations to Desdemona! He had to tell of interviews with the Viceroy, of interviews with one native prince, and the other native prince, of interviews with almost everybody except the great Mogul. It is quite conceivable that he and the Duke of Argyll worked together like brothers in the Indian Office; and it is just as conceivable that they were equally responsible for the terrible hash of Indian affairs which they made while they were there. For five dismal years our empire was governed by a couple of small *savants*—by two political doctrinaires—living, moving, and having their being in the mere pedantries of officialism. The

cacaothes scribendi seems to be as much an essential of their existence as it is of that of their political chief. The Duke is continually contributing to the *Nineteenth Century* and the *Contemporary Review*, and only the other day he produced two massive volumes on the Eastern Question. Mr. Grant Duff has the same passion for rushing into print. Even when Mr. Gladstone came forth with his "Bulgarian Horrors" his subordinate could not sit still, but must needs pen a letter to the *Times*, in which he promulgated some wild nonsense as to placing the Duke of Edinburgh on the throne of Bulgaria. How could two such pure official pedants be expected to understand the Ameer, or to penetrate the plans of Russia? Mr. Grant Duff's demeanour in the House of Commons is about identical with that which he observes outside it. He fires off, every now and then, neat, fluent, excessively precise little speeches which, judging from his manner of delivering them, appear to give unqualified satisfaction to himself, if they don't to anybody else. They are listened to by the House with a kind of lazy tolerance, and the result is to impress the stranger with the conviction that the lolling Commons have permitted the clever glibness to which they have been treated to go in at one ear and out at the other. Mr. Grant Duff's personality, indeed, is not of the kind which the House of Commons ever much loves. The House instinctively shrinks from the cut-and-dry, stereotyped official person, and more especially if he seems to surround himself with an air of preternatural knowingness, and of one who deems himself an intellectual head taller than most of his audience. This may possibly account for the hon. gentleman's exceedingly prim and tidy, but slight and fragile, oratory being usually received with indifference, if not with actual impatience.

MOTLEY.

TALES FROM THE DRAMATISTS.

By ALFRED HENRY BROMILOW.

No. X.—COMEDY.

"A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE."

THIS author of this very lively comedy, first produced at the Theatre Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1718, was Mrs. Centlivre. It is full of bustle, and, though the plot is highly improbable, and the language in the original edition far from chaste, it was, and has always been, a favourite with the public. In 1774 it was played at Covent Garden with Mrs. Woodward in the principal part; and, again, in 1814, it was brought forward at Drury Lane, with Mrs. Bannister as chief actor.

COLONEL FEIGNWELL and his companion, Freeman, were drinking wine in a small room in a fashionable tavern in London. The Colonel did not appear to be in most buoyant of spirits, and to the inquiry what was the cause of his depression, he confessed that he was in love with some beauty he had met at Bath, and whom, in addition, he was determined to win. He was certain she had come to town, and in sore necessity of being relieved from an irksome position. From further conversation, Freeman made out that the object of the soldier's amour was Anne Lovely, of whose unfortunate *placement* all the city had heard. No one was more fitted to give the details connected with her station than the landlord of the tavern, Sackbut. He had known the damsel's father, as also the young girl from her birth.

Sackbut was therefore summoned, and the Colonel having explained matters, the host answered him that it was useless to think of marriage in that quarter. Miss Lovely's father was the embodiment of eccentricity, and, to prevent his daughter from getting married, had, in his will, handed her over to the care of four distinct guardians, under each of which she was compelled to live one quarter in every year. All of these guardians were opposed to each other in tastes and manners. This one was a withered beau; another a canting Quaker; a third a 'Change broker; and the fourth a half-witted virtuoso, whose occupation consisted in gazing upon objects of antiquity, and in reading the stories of Sir John Mandeville. Yet, forsooth! the claimant of Anne's hand was obliged to have the consent of all these gentlemen before marrying her, or, least, before obtaining her portion.

From this description none would have doubted the truth of Sackbut's assertion, that a wedding in that quarter was, if not

an impossiblity, well nigh so. But Feignwell had given his word to Miss Lovely at Bath that he would see her. So, not believing in the waste of time, the soldier asked for the direction of the beau's house, having determined to treat with that worthy before proceeding to the others. Sackbut gave him the full address, and the Colonel started off.

It was the Quaker's turn to be in possession of our heroine She was, therefore, wearying herself at the residence of Obadiah Prim. She objected to put on the old-fashioned cap that, on her arrival, had been presented to her. She complained most bitterly to her maid, Betty. This arch conspirator counselled her mistress to put an end to her misery by getting married. Even, said she if such a proceeding caused her the loss of her fortune, it might at least restore happiness to her breast. Miss Lovely replied that she had no wish to run the risk of the loss of her money, and she knew that Colonel Feignwell, the gallant she had become acquainted with at Bath, was quite able to secure her hand and heart, without jeopardising her fortune. If he was able to do that, thought Biddy, he was a very clever man.

As the Colonel was walking through the park, he came upon Sir Philip Modelove, Miss Lovely's beau guardian. By an adroit line of conversation, the soldier soon ingratiated himself into the knight's good graces. At a suitable moment, too, the lover made mention of Anne. Sir Philip had that morning left her with the Quaker. The beau prided himself upon being a Frenchman, so Feignwell pretended to be of that nationality, the only country, in the knight's opinion productive of "fine gentlemen." In a short time the gallant had made himself so well acquainted with the guardian's likes and dislikes, that, coming to Miss Lovely, he had the satisfaction of hearing Sir Philip declare that none should have her with his consent but a "fine gentleman."

On this Feignwell spoke, and presently was gratified with words of encouragement from Modelove, who went so far as to say that the Colonel, being "a fine gentleman," should have his support if he ventured to approach his ward. If, Le Feignwell—for such the soldier had called himself—would take the trouble to slip into St. James's, Sir Philip would give him a written consent to marry the damsel.

Mrs. Prim and Miss Lovely were enjoying a most entertaining *tête-à-tête*. It consisted in a running fire of comments on the part of the Quakeress on the evil of low dresses, which, she said, tempted man, and conjured up strong desire. In fact, the whole generation of women, as compared with the past, Mrs. Prim of course excepted, was frightfully immoral. Anne gave her guardian's wife some extremely severe hits about the want of virtue among

women, even in the days gone past, and about the vanity, pride, and prudery often hidden beneath broad ribbons and buttoned up dresses.

When Obediah entered the apartment, he led up the assault on the fortress of wickedness. He bade Miss Lovely to cover up her bosom, as otherwise it might be the means of destroying the grace, the purity, the chastity of his holy soul. To this the ward made answer that Obadiah's servant, Mary, wore a tight dress, but that was no safeguard to innocence, as she had heard Obadiah asking his domestic, in the pantry, to unbutton her neck, that he might view "a little, little bit of her delicious bosom."

This reply stunned the gentle Obadiah, who, on being appealed to by his wife for an explanation, said: "She talketh unintelligibly—verily, it troubleth me."

The scene might have lasted for a long time but for the entrance of Sir Philip Modelove and Feignwell. The lover was introduced to the Quaker, who immediately disapproved of him. The Colonel, however, managed to slip a note into Anne's hand, and awaited the coming of the other guardians. They had been all invited there by Sir Philip. Presently they came, the virtuoso, the 'Change broker, each of whom, by their remarks, Feignwell did not fail to recognise. In the end, the whole three of them came, upon different grounds, to the conclusion that Feignwell was a very unsuitable person. Not that he lost heart, far from it, having seen the men with whom he had to deal, he was the better prepared to invent schemes for their overthrow.

Feignwell went home, and there dressed himself up in an old fantastic Egyptian robe. He then repaired to Sackbut's tavern. The host and he had already arranged their plans, and from their conversation Periwinkle, the virtuoso, was each moment expected. He was paying the visit to have a talk with the great *savant* from Egypt. Upon the guardian's arrival the *pseudo* traveller told, to the intense satisfaction of his listener, the most monstrous lies. Among other articles, said the magician, such Feignwell pretended to be, he had a belt called the Moros Musphonon, which, on being applied to the body, rendered the wearer invisible. An object of such curious, nay, wonderful power, had a mighty attraction for Periwinkle. He asked Sackbut to clasp it round his waist; but the wiseacre refused, saying that he did not want to go headlong to the devil. So, to test its vaunted magic, the virtuoso put it on his own hips. No sooner had he done this than Sackbut in a loud voice called upon the magician to make his customer visible. In vain Periwinkle protested, in vain he assured the landlord that he still stood there; Sackbut said he beheld him not, and implored the traveller to let the man come back. This Feign-

well did by taking off the belt, and, at the suggestion of Periwinkle putting it on himself. The Colonel remarked that it was necessary for the watcher first to turn and front the east. Wile Periwinkle and Sackbut were in this position, a friendly trap door under Feignwell was opened, and he disappeared. Great was the consternation of the guardian, his wonder increased as he heard the magician's voice without seeing his face. Seizing a favourable opportunity, Sackbut directed Periwinkle's eyes away, so as to enable his friend to come up unperceived. This being accomplished, the Colonel said that a seer in Grand Cairo had informed him that in England there lived a lady with four guardians. This lady was he destined to marry. She would, in due course, bear him a son, who would become a famous astrologer and maker of mummeries. The guardian, who should first give his consent to the marriage was to receive, as reward, the Moros Musphonon, the wonder-belt that transported the possessor, at will, to any part of the earth. It suddenly dawned upon Periwinkle that he was one of the guardians alluded to, and, being anxious to secure the wonderful instrument, he was on the point of giving the Colonel consent to marry Miss Lovely, when a messenger entered, and addressing the supposed traveller by name, ruined all. The Egyptian at once sought safety in flight, whilst Periwinkle congratulated himself upon his extreme sagacity and extraordinary penetration.

Another messenger, Freeman, came to tell Periwinkle that an uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, was lying ill at Coventry, and, the sick man being possessed of considerable estates, it behoved the virtuoso to present himself at the bedside.

To overcome the 'Change broker was the Colonel's next move. To do this he accompanied Freeman to the 'Change Alley. Here he was introduced to Tradelove, the broker-guardian, as a great Dutch merchant. In addition to this, Freeman told the broker that he had it confidentially from a foreigner that the Spaniards had raised the siege of Cagliari. It would be three hours before the news became general, therefore let the broker profit by the information in securing certain shares. Tradelove followed the advice, and also made a wager of two thousand pounds with Jan Van Titamtireleretta, Herr Van Feignwell (the Colonel) that the siege of Cagliari had been raised. The stakes were deposed in the hands of Freeman. This having been done, and Sackbut's having been appointed the rendezvous, the Colonel and Freeman went thither.

My worthy host had a rare piece of information to impart. He had a letter directed to Obadiah Prim, which might be of use to the gallant. On opening it, a Quaker from Pennsylvania, was recommended to attention. Of the advent of this stranger

the lover determined to take advantage by representing himself as the person spoken of. That being the case, the letter was sent on to Prim.

But Periwinkle, the virtuoso, had yet to be disposed of. It having reached the Colonel's ear that Sir Toby Periwinkle, the uncle, was ill, and that he had a servant, named Pillage, with a few other particulars, the gallant set out upon another adventure.

In his absence from the inn, Tradelove came to storm furiously. The bet he had made and the shares he had bought had ruined him. The news supplied by Freeman was ill grounded. Freeman suggested that, as his friend, the Dutchman, had taken a fancy to the English women, Tradlove should, as a fair payment of the wager, palm Miss Lovely on to him. This scheme found favour with Tradelove, and he readily gave consent.

When the Colonel reached Periwinkle's house he wept loudly, and then told of the death of Sir Toby. After some parleying the virtuoso consented to sign a lease, granting his petitioner, Mr. Pillage, formerly Sir Toby's steward, the use of a cottage and garden at a nominal rent. Whilst Periwinkle was examining the pen, of which he complained, Pillage (the Colonel) slipped another piece of paper in the place of the lease. The virtuoso signed it, and the steward, well satisfied with his work, retired.

On reaching (now in the garb of a Dutchman) Sackbut's tavern, Feignwell found Tradelove anxiously awaiting him. Freeman mentioned the scheme that Tradelove and he had talked over. The Dutchman said he had no desire to press for payment; no wish to ruin a merchant; he would therefore consider the debt discharged if Tradelove would give him a written permission to marry Miss Lovely. The 'Change broker, eager to escape from bankruptcy, did so.

After long expostulations Miss Lovely had put on a buttoned-up dress; had removed her patches; and had accustomed her tongue to the Quakers. When Tradelove entered to tell her of the husband he had selected, she was in tears. He tried to cheer her, but had not succeeded when Periwinkle arrived to give orders for gloves and other funeral requisites, Upon his steps came Sir Philip Modelove and Obadiah Prim. The latter had the letter, which had been already inspected at Sackbut's, in his hand. He desired his wife to make ready for the reception of the holy man. The guardians then held a consultation, or rather dissension, among themselves as to the sort of man Anne should marry. Periwinkle said he should give his consent to none but he who had studied the profundity of nature. Sir Philip informed Anne that in such a case she might expect to be anatomised, or pored over through a microscope, to see how her blood circulated, from the crown of her

head to the sole of her feet. Tradelove said he hated curiosities, and the man for Anne must be one of business, such as had already found in the person of a rich Dutch merchant. Here, Sir Philip informed his ward that she would stand a good chance of becoming a fluent speaker of the language of hogs. Obadiah said none would be worthy of her but he who sought not for baubles, but for the light within; whilst Sir Philip was for no other than "a fine gentleman." Anne grew so annoyed at these remarks, and the guardians at the stupidity of one another, that they all, with the exception of the pious Obadiah, sought comfort in retreat.

A servant intimated that one Simon Pure sought admittance. He was shown up. The stranger, though attired as one of the Friends, was in reality Feignwell. Mrs. Prim and Miss Lovely came to greet him. The latter was very petulant; so much so that Simon Pure asked Obadiah to leave him with the maiden a few moments that he might drive the evil spirit from her bosom. The Prims complied with the request; Feignwell declared himself. The lady was so startled that she screamed, and Obadiah rushed in to see what was the cause of alarm. Anne told her guardian that she would scream murder, thieves, fire, if that canting fool (Simon Pure) was not ordered away. Simon told Obadiah to take no heed of her language, he would yet cast the evil spirit forth, provided he and the damsel were left alone. Obadiah again withdrew, remarking, as he withdrew, "Verily, I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit." The lovers hastily resolved to support each other, the lady by a pretended conversion, and the gallant by phrases of the rankest purity. On returning, Obadiah was surprised at the power of Simon, whose influence was verily so great over the imps of darkness. Simon narrated a vision he had had. A maiden was standing on a precipice; he heard a voice telling him to save her. He did so; and the damsel grew unto his side. He was sure the lady he had seen in his vision was Anne. He hoped the dream might come true, that one so fair might be saved from destruction. Obadiah was delighted; yea, had it ever been his desire to give the bosom of his ward to one of the righteous.

At this moment another messenger entered, announcing another Simon Pure. The consternation was great; impudence alone would save Feignwell. As the holy friend appeared, a letter was given to Obadiah, from a well-wisher—in reality from Freeman—in which notice was given of the arrival of a desperate cut-throat, under the disguise of a Friend. Doubtless this second Simon was the bravo; so by the aid of Freeman's impudence and the epistle, the real Simon was ignominiously expelled. He threatened, however, to return with such witnesses as would establish his identity. Whilst he was away, Feignwell got Obadiah's written consent to marry Anne.

Then the witnesses for Simon arrived; but to no purpose. Al the consents having been obtained, Feienwell and his bride elect laughed heartily. To add to this scene, the brother guardians, having been marshalled by the ubiquitous Freeman, streamed into the chamber. Having learned how matters stood, they all jeered Obadiah. Sir Philip observed that the bridegroom would make a scurvy beau. Feignwell remarked that the knight thought differently in the Park. The real state of things grew clear to Sir Philip, and he set up a loud "ha! ha! ha!" The broker was glad *he* had not been deceived; he hated Quakers. Feignwell reminded him of the wager, and produced the agreement. The virtuoso said *he* had nearly been caught by a fellow from Grand Cairo, but beforel Miss Lovely's fortune could be obtained, his consent would be requisite. Feignwell told him that Sir Toby Periwinkle was yet alive; there was no need for mourning, and much less for the granting of leases. When Periwinkle thought he was giving the lease of a house, he was signing a lease for life of a most beautiful tenement.

In fact, Colonel Feignwell had obtained all their consents; and the "fine gentleman," the magician, the Dutch merchant, the steward, and the Quaker, were all one and the same person; so no more remained to be done or said than to wish—

> To all and each a fair good night,
> And rosy dreams, and slumbers light.

HEARTS;

OR, ENGLAND A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IV.

Thomas Giffard leaves his wife in the care of his oldest friend.

THE day following a festival is apt to be very flat and wearisome, and that succeeding the christening at Fenwick Hall was no exception to the rule.

Guests were preparing to depart, who, from too great a distance to return the same day, had been invited to remain a night, and until they had left, those who were to stay longer could not plan any amusement, but were waiting to say farewell to them.

Lady Compton said she must be excused, on account of her health, from leaving her chamber, where, in company with her mother, she took part in the baby-worship that was in progress while the little pagod was dipped into his bath, and at its height when he emerged from it, roaring and struggling and panting for breath, and lay on the nurse's lap, kicking and crowing, while she wiped him dry; and when she shook the powder-puff, and he made lunges at it with his little red fists, and tried to thrust it into his mouth, the first commandment was broken by the doating mother as she asked Mrs. Homewood whether she ever knew a child take so much notice at his age, and was assured she had been herself quite as forward and engaging, which was a circumstance she could hardly have thought possible, unless she had been informed of it on the best authority in the world.

"Naughty papa, not to come in oftener to see darling baby!" said the doating mother, kissing her child from head to foot without the slightest notion that there was anything foolish in her excessive fondness for the innocent, helpless creature that she had brought into the world, and perfectly unconscious that from the moment of her son's birth her husband had been deposed, to make way for the new monarch without the slightest compunction on her part, and was not only expected to bear his dethronement good-humouredly, but also to toady the tyrant she had elevated into his place.

Poor silly, unselfish, little worshipper, with a mind too small to entertain more than one idea at a time! But a few months before, Lady Compton would have broken her heart had her parents refused to give her to Sir Robert; now she felt the grate folly of

which she had been guilty in mating so unequally, not only in station but intellect, and was sensible that her husband could not amuse himself for an hour in her society, nor could she feel easy in his. But with baby she was lady-paramount, and therefore the child was now placed above the father in the soft bosom where he loved to nestle.

Now, lest it should appear that Sir Robert was at all indifferent to the honours of paternity that had newly fallen on him, we must inform the reader that for some weeks after little Gerard was born his father stole into the chamber where he and his mother lay, as often as he could devise an excuse for entering there; but there was, so to speak, such an overpowering atmosphere of caudle, such an awful presence of nurse and mother-in-law, on all occasions, that the gallant soldier felt cowed under the women's eyes, and morally "snubbed"—metaphorically "snuffed out," whenever he suggested anything for the comfort of his wife or infant, or essayed to make any difference in the routine that custom had prescribed during such seasons.

Here let me warn young wives that one rival is just as bad as another in the affections of those we love best in the world, and that a fond husband may be driven to seek solace and amusement elsewhere even by his first-born, if made of more importance than himself in his home.

Now, too, there was fresh anger in Sir Robert's mind at his wife's continued withdrawal from the society with which he had filled his home. The Dowager Lady Compton was going from one to the other in the morning-room, endeavouring by excess of courtesy to make amends to the ladies who were taking leave for the absence of their hostess; while a few of the most intimate sought Lady Compton in her retirement, and expressed their regret at her indisposition; and one or two even ventured to whisper Mrs. Homewood that they feared her daughter was not as happy as she deserved to be.

The gentlemen were knocking the billiard-balls about, or looking at each other's horses before starting.

Left alone with strange ladies, Honoria felt that they ignored her presence as completely as it was possible for them to do without positive rudeness. At such times a woman who is at once beautiful and unamiable to her own sex receives her punishment. Honoria had no desire to lengthen it, so taking a piece of bread before the breakfast was removed, she passed out into the terrace and along a covered alley to the nearest fish-pond, where she was soon amused by the eagearness with which the crumbs she threw into the clear water were seized by the carp.

"I am very sorry your husband has to leave us, Mrs. Giffard; but he promises to return as soon as he can; and since it is his wish

that you should remain here until he comes back, I hope Lady Compton and myself may prevail on you to stay."

Honoria turned round in great surprise at these words of Sir Robert's.

"I know nothing of this," she said. "What calls Mr. Giffard away?"

"A messenger has just arrived from Hearts, sent by your sister, with a letter that came down from London after you started yesterday."

Honoria kept silence. Although her pride was deeply wounded it was strong enough to restrain her anger, and she refrained from telling Sir Robert that she had not the honour of being in her husband's confidence, although the words were on her tongue.

Sir Robert seeing the flush on her cheek, and knowing the resentment that was surging in her breast, thought it best to go at once to Mr. Giffard, who was having a game of billiards with Sir William Draper, while his groom was saddling his horses, and his valet packing his portmanteau. Taking the first opportunity of letting his old friend know that he desired to speak a few words with him in private, Sir Robert led Thomas Giffard to the recess of the nearest window, and sitting with him in it, began thus:

"I am afraid I have made a stupid blunder, Giffard. I took it for granted that you had no secrets from your wife, because I tell Charlotte everything. After looking everywhere for Mrs. Giffard, my aunt told me she was feeding the carp, so I went down to the fish-ponds after her to express my regret at your having to leave us, and invite her to stay, as you said you would prefer she should, until your return from London."

"'Tis very unfortunate as it happens," cried Thomas Giffard, "for I had not yet told her anything of the matter that takes me to London. I wish now she had learnt the whole particulars."

Sir Robert, with surprise, saw that Mr. Giffard was so much moved by what had been told him that the cold perspiration burst out all over him, and he raised his peruke the better to wipe his head and face with his handkerchief.

"I have never acquainted Honoria with the heavy losses I have had through my broker's dishonesty, from a wish to spare her anxiety, and she knew nothing, of course, of his trial and execution in the spring. When I went up as a witness for the prosecution I talked to her at second-hand about the exhibition that was soon to open, and she thought I purposed to see the pictures, and had no graver object for my journey. Since Mr. Samuel Price's wife has died, their two infants are thrown on my sister's hands, who, with her daughter, has to take the whole charge of these children; and now she is fallen ill and I must advise her what is best to be done without delay."

"I regret extremely having spoken to Mrs. Giffard," said Sir Robert; "she seemed so excessively annoyed at hearing for the first time of your journey from me instead of from yourself."

"I meant to have given some other reason for leaving her, in order that she might remain here enjoying herself without anything to disturb her happiness."

"I see 'the boy is father to the man,' and that you are just the same unselfish being you were in the old Westminster school-days. I often thought about them when I was out in Canada, lying under the open forest wrapped in my blanket, with my comrades stretched on the ground beside me sound asleep, after a long day's march, the log-fire crackling, and the moon shining down on us through the trees. You have always been ready to bear other people's burthens. How many times have you had your hand cut open by a beastly cane for helping me with my Latin verses, or, worse still, been sent down for prompting me when I stuck fast in Homer, because you were unable to resist the temptation of giving me a word, although you knew you would lose your place?"

"You've a longer memory than most men, Compton," replied Thomas Giffard, his face lighting up with a genial glow of pleasure at his schoolfellow's kindly words. Then he said in a dejected manner, "Well, its useless to shirk it any longer. I must go and make my peace with Honoria."

"Do you say she knows nothing of the trial? I should have thought she saw that in the newspapers."

"She has never looked at one since her father's death. The old Squire used to make her read the news to him regularly, and she hates the very name of politics."

"I don't blame her for that. Women have no business to meddle with them, and the remainder of a newspaper is seldom fit for their perusal if they have either modesty or compassion. The numerous offences, and the frequency of executions, fill the columns with horrors. After every gaol delivery there are numbers hanged for murder, for the highway, and theft. Not to mention that there are usually three or four poor half-starved Irishmen strung up at a time for altering pennies and half-pennies into shillings and sixpences. It's a comfort to know the distress in Ireland is not so great as when the woollen manufacture first declined through the introduction of cotton; but it's bad enough; and the White Boys and Hearts of Oak still keep capital from investment in that unhappy country," said Sir Robert, thoughtfully.

"The severity of the laws does not deter men from breaking them. There were nearly a dozen prisoners brought up along with Mr. Price to receive sentence of death, and besides those a

number of convicts who were sentenced to transportation, and taken from Newgate to Blackfriars, to be put on board a lighter and shipped to his Majesty's plantations."

"How many days were you obliged to be in court? It must have been a horrible nuisance for you."

"Yes, it was; but I was only there one day—I was fortunate. Mr. Price was brought from the Poultry Compter to the Old Bailey soon after eight in the morning. I believe when they told him to step out of the coach he fainted away, and was carried into the 'Queen's Head,' a public house opposite, where he was allowed to remain some minutes to recover himself. Even then he was too weak to walk into the dock without assistance; and as soon as he raised his eyes, which were streaming with tears, he fainted away again."

"What impudent scoundrels fellows of his stamp are until they are brought to justice, and then what craven hounds!"

"You could not have withheld your pity from him if you had seen the poor wretch brought in. They let him have a chair, and allowed him to sit in the inner bar. He was dressed in a suit of light-grey trimmed with black, and wore a bag wig. You may laugh, Compton, but he looked so respectable it seemed horrible he should be condemned to suffer an ignominious death; and, I assure you, when I saw him pleading so piteously for mercy, and entreating his lordship to use his endeavours with his Majesty in his behalf, I hoped he would promise to intercede for him, especially when Mr. Price urged as a reason that he had been offered protection at Cambray if he would change his religion."

"That story must have been invented by the cunning rascal as likely to soften the hearts of a jury composed of staunch Protestants."

"It was of no avail, however. The judge declined to interfere with the course of justice, and the jury pronounced him guilty without any hesitation; and, when the sheriff was told to take him into custody, he fell down as if he had been shot."

"I confess, Giffard, that I should have been as hardhearted as the judge and jury. His gentlemanly appearance would have told against him with me instead of awakening any pity for him. Those poor devils of Irishmen you spoke of were a thousand times more deserving of compassion. The desire among city men to grow rich on a sudden has reached a frightful height. One scheme after another is started, and half-pay officers, helpless women, and others, who are tempted by a higher rate of interest than they can safely obtain for their money, find the bait irresistible, and are ruined, utterly ruined, by the cupidity of these villains."

"This Mr. Price kept his carriage, and gave most expensive

dinners," said Thomas Giffard bitterly, remembering a banquet at Clapham where he had feasted with other victims. "His wife and family went regularly to Brighthelmstone, and her milliner's bills would have frightened a husband who had had to pay them out of his own pocket, instead of out of other people's, or not at all."

"Well, all this talk is hindering you, Giffard. I'm sure I needn't tell you that I betrayed you most innocently, I had not the faintest conception of the storm that was brewing until I saw Mrs. Giffard with such a brow as Juno darkens when the cloud-compelling Jove has brought down lightning he did not bargain for by offending his awful spouse."

"'Tis no jesting matter," said Mr. Giffard, his gloom returning in an instant; for he was highly sensitive, especially in all that concerned his wife, whom he loved infinitely more than she believed.

"I am foolishly candid myself," said Sir Robert, in a tone of contrition; "not only with regard to the trust I repose in my wife, but in laying my heart open to everybody."

"Why don't you say you 'wear your heart upon your sleeve for daws to pick at?'—that is the correct quotation."

"So I do. I'll confess to you what I did yesterday, as the best amends I can make for my folly. I found myself telling Mrs. Giffard that I should have proposed to her a second time if I had had the happiness of seeing her again before her marriage."

"I must say that was a great mistake, Compton, and one I can hardly pardon even in such a friend as yourself. How did it happen?"

"It was after dinner if you think the excuse does not increase the offence. When the wine's in the wit's out. It was entirely unpremeditated, and I had not the slightest intention of recurring to the past when I sat down by Mrs. Giffard."

"I am sure, by confessing your error so frankly and unnecessarily, you meant no harm; but you must remember that your wife may be uneasy if you talk much to mine, and for that reason alone the less you see of each other the better."

"You are going to leave Mrs. Giffard with us now, at any rate. If you do not, I shall fancy my folly is the cause of your taking her with you."

"'Tis said a man should not lend three things to his dearest friend. His money, his horse, or his wife. But I will leave Honoria in your care, and trust my honour in your hands as in a brother's. Now I must go to her; good-bye, Compton."

The two men wrung each other's hands and parted. Thomas Giffard, seeking his wife to say farewell, was astonished that she asked no questions, but appeared to think it the most natural

thing in the world that he should leave Fenwick Hall in the midst of their long-anticipated visit, and hurry again to London without offering any explanation of his conduct.

This unexpected indifference of Honoria's, instead of puzzling Mr. Giffard, or awaking any apprehension in his mind, was extremely agreeable, as it saved him present trouble, and he concluded that, being occupied by the gaiety and novelty of the scenes around her, she was too well amused to disturb herself by anxiety as to the unknown reason of his departure.

He was not a man to seek any deeper motion for a woman's behaviour than the whim of a moment; while in Honoria's breast there raged one of those storms of passion to which from childhood she has been shown to have been subject, but which, in her later years, she had acquired the power of suppressing so artfully that they were now a thousand times more dangerous than in her youth, both to her own peace and that of those whose happiness was in her hands.

Her husband, having saluted her all the more affectionately for the submissive silence with which she received the news of his intended journey, and his farewell at the same time, walked in from the garden quite cheerfully to say good-bye to them within. Having done so, however, his good-humour entirely forsook him as he prepared to leave the hall, on seeing the number of men-servants waiting about in order to levy the usual tax on a parting guest.

One fellow held his horse, another his stirrups. His cloak was handed by one, his hat by a second, a third gave him his whip.

To each he was compelled, by the custom of the day, to give liberally, and, after parting with all his loose cash, and cursing the whole tribe of menials in his heart, having redeemed each article at half its cost, he was rushing off without putting on his gloves, when, just as he prepared to mount, the man who had taken them in charge came running out breathlessly:

"Mr. Giffard! stop, sir! You have forgotten your gloves, if you please."

"Keep them for your trouble," cried Thomas Giffard, as he rode off, adding under his breath: "They are not worth a shilling."

The footman came back to his fellows looking like a fool, and resenting the loss of his vail as deeply as if his pocket had been picked of a crown.

Mr. Giffard rode away moodily, followed by his groom in no better temper. The man vexed to be taken from good quarters free of charge; the master counting the cost of a day and night

in his friend's house, and thinking how much less he should have had to give for his entertainment at an inn. He reflected on the wickedness of scattering gold and silver among a pack of lazy, over-fed servants, when he could have put it to much better use by giving it to his sister, for the maintenance of the wretched, penniless children she had undertaken to provide for. Then he counted his own heavy losses, and made himself still more miserable by remembering the two suits of clothes he had ordered for this visit.

"A suit of laced clothes forty pounds, a suit of black velvet twenty-three pounds. Sixty-three pounds for two suits of clothes!" muttered Thomas Giffard. "I wish I had gone without them. I might very well have spared the expense, as my stay has been so short. My wedding clothes would have done very well, and Honoria would not have resented having to wear hers if I had done the same. Poor woman, it will be some years before I buy her a dress as handsome as her wedding-gown, if I ever should be able to do so again."

With such thoughts Mr. Giffard went farther and farther from Fenwick Hall, missing the pleasant coolness of the long, shady avenue when he came out on the dusty road through the iron gates, and when he found he had not a sixpence left to throw to the old woman who hobbled from the hedge to open them, calling to his man to give her one, he renewed his anger at the extortion practiced on him by Sir Robert Compton's servants.

But not one thought was turned on Honoria's silent acquiescence with his unexplained journey, nor did any fears about his wife trouble him.

CHAPTER V.

Thomas Giffard returns to Fenwick Hall and learns that Honoria has already departed, but still under Sir Robert Compton's care. Guilty or Not Guilty?

A WEEK had passed, which to Thomas Giffard had been one of the dreariest in his life. No greater contrast could well be imagined than was presented by the appearance of his sister's house after leaving Sir Robert Compton's stately mansion. In a side street of small brick houses stained within and without by the sooty air, which renders cleanliness a luxury in London, lived the goldsmith's widow, with her daughters and the infants they had adopted.

Thomas Giffard was considerably younger than his sister, and he looked with horror on her poor patched and painted face and shabby finery, when, after keeping him waiting a couple of hours,

she considered her toilet sufficiently advanced to receive him. For indolent and selfish by nature, Mrs. Price retained, even in her poverty, the same slothful habits that had helped on her husband's ruin; and, having nothing else left to waste, she wasted time, never rising until noon, and then spending an incredible time in dressing herself with as much care as if she had still been in the habit of receiving company. Her daughters, who at the time of their father's fraudulent bankruptcy were handsome girls just growing up, had, after his execution, hid their faces from every friend, and found every friend but too glad to find it was their wish to do so. They were now faded, care-worn women; one attending to the household work, and the other nursing the baby and teaching the elder child its letters, while making their clothes up as well as she could, out of the well-worn garments she and her sister had turned and mended for their mother and themselves until they could no longer be used in their original form. The baby was the centre of this picture, as had been the infant heir in that other strangely-contrasted scene at Fenwick Hall. For all "the pomp of heraldry, the boast of power" would have been valueless, comparatively, without that lovely child who was newly-christened "Gerard." While the culminating point of the crimes, the extravagance, the beggary of the felon brothers was the utter misery of the wailing infant who inherited their name and shame. But to avoid as much as possible the latter, the former had been discontinued. Mr. Giffard's sister, the Widow Price, having taken the surname of Lambert after her husband's execution at Smithfield, and she and her daughters deciding to give it also to the orphans left by the second criminal of the family, Thomas Giffard found it impossible to arrange his sister's affairs under a week—a week that appeared an age, for he was anxious to return to his wife One only thought gave him the slightest comfort, and this was the consciousness of his own unselfish forethought in wholly concealing from Honoria the extent of his anxieties and losses. She, at least, he believed, was happy, and might continue so if still contented to remain in ignorance.

It was evening when the deep shadow of the long avenue in Fenwick Park again closed over master and man as they rode quickly under the overarching boughs. Soon Mr. Giffard was once more in the antique hall, with the marble flags echoing to his footsteps, and the long level rays of the low sun making the stained windows all one jewelled blaze of topaz, sapphire, ruby, emerald, and amethyst, and flashing fantastic gleams or shifting colours athwart the shining pieces of armour and dark portraits hung against the opposite wall. There was something strange and inexplicable in the manner of Sir Robert Compton's servants as Mr.

Giffard inquired after their master. Something unaccountable. Yet what it was that sent a thrill of indefinite fear through his stout breast Thomas Giffard could not have told. It was communicated to the unhappy man the moment he looked in the faces of these fellows. The air of withholding intelligence it would have been difficult and painful to give,—pity, in one of the common-place and usually blank countenances he looked upon, contempt in another. In that of the fellow from whom he had refused to redeem his gloves at more than their worth when he rode away, Mr. Giffard read the satisfaction a mean man finds in full revenge for an affront he dares not complain of to a superior in station.

"Where shall I find Sir Robert Compton?" inquired Mr. Giffard, with an agitation he could scarcely conceal.

"Sir Robert is not at home, sir."

"Can I see Lady Compton?"

"She is very ill, indeed, sir. Not expected to live through the night."

"Mrs. Giffard is still here, is she not?"

"Mrs. Giffard has gone home, sir."

"What?" asked Mr. Giffard, sharply.

"Mrs. Giffard went home early in the day, sir. Sir Robert ordered a coach and four to be ready as soon as possible after breakfast, and has himself accompanied Mrs. Giffard to Hearts."

A footman in a gray livery here came forward and told Mr. Giffard that *his* lady, the Dowager Lady Compton, would be glad to see him in her private sitting-room.

Mr. Giffard, with heavy forebodings of some unimaginable misery, followed the servant, and was soon ushered into the venerable lady's presence, who tried to assume an air of composure, and to receive the unfortunate gentleman in such a manner as not to increase the alarm it was natural he should begin to feel.

"I am extremely grieved at hearing your niece's illness has so rapidly assumed a dangerous aspect," said Thomas Giffard, taking the hand which the Dowager Lady Compton extended towards him with a gesture more eloquent than words in expressing her emotion and desire to communicate her sympathy with her visitor, rather than a wish to awaken his for herself.

"There are deeper griefs than sickness, nay, even *death* can cause. Things far harder to bear," said the woman of family, proudly. "I pity my nephew less than I do yourself. I am so very, very sorry for you, Mr. Giffard. I can't tell you how deeply I feel for you." Here she wrung his hands, while the tears streamed from her eyes; and the tears of the aged are very painful to behold.

"I am at a loss to understand you, madam; pray tell me what

has occurred in my absence. Why did not Mrs. Giffard remain until my return from London."

"*I* desired her to leave Fenwick Hall," said the old lady with stern, yet trembling accents; and as she looked Mr. Giffard in the face she tried to steady every nerve, as a brave man does when he stands to receive the enemy's fire.

"You!——Honoria! I thought my wife was a favourite of yours."

"You thought rightly, Mr. Giffard. I sincerely admired your wife; and I have never permitted, much less encouraged, the petty spite most of her own sex liked to treat her with whenever she gave them an excuse. Alas! it is a very bad sign when a woman is disliked by women," continued the Dowager sadly. "The sentence that has been ratified by an overwhelming majority is certain to be just."

"You will greatly oblige me, madam, by a plain statement of facts. I do not know in the least what has given rise to these remarks. I am on the rack until you tell me."

"You are, perhaps, aware of the great admiration my nephew had for your wife? I mean, when she was still Miss Giffard of Hearts, and he was still unmarried."

"Yes, I am aware that he made her an offer of marriage and was refused."

"He would have proposed to her a second time, but he never had the opportunity before her father's death; and, after the lands passed to yourself, I persuaded Robert to abandon the pursuit of a young lady who had shown only indifference towards his constant affection, and who was now in every way an undesirable match for a man with an encumbered estate."

"I cannot see how these remarks bear upon my present anxiety," said Mr. Giffard.

"I wish to explain my own share in this most unfortunate business. I was very desirous my nephew should acquit me of any undeserved rancour towards Mrs. Giffard, and I know by some it was thought most improper that he should have placed her at the head of his table; but for that I am only to blame. I felt a wish to atone to the lady for the advice I had given Robert with regard to his marriage, by showing her the greatest respect and consideration. As it happened, I made a great mistake by advising that she should be placed in a position where her grace and beauty became doubly conspicuous, at a time, too, when Lady Compton had displeased her husband by withdrawing herself from his guests. I never saw a woman I admired so much as your wife for all those charms of person and manner that attract in society."

Mr. Giffard bent his head.

"After you left, my nephew seemed unable to tear himself away from your wife for even half an hour. I do not think he was at all aware of the fascination she exerted over him; but he was sure, if I, or any one else, endeavoured to divert his attention from her, to seek some fresh excuse for immediately returning to her society. Unfortunately every day this behaviour became more marked. Each day his pleasure in conversing with her was shown more openly, and his eagerness to seek her was no longer kept under the slightest restraint."

Mr. Giffard, pale as death, wiped the beads that started on his brow as the cold perspiration burst from every pore.

"One day," continued the aged lady, "some of our guests had expressed a wish to ride to Bayard's Green, where the tournament was held in old times, and directly the excursion was planned, and Mrs. Giffard was to be of the party, Sir Robert altered his intention of going on the river, and rode beside her all day. In everything it was the same. Mrs. Homewood was continually complaining to me of Sir Robert's forgetfulness of his wife, and I have reason to believe made it even more hard for Charlotte to endure by pointing every instance of his attention to Mrs. Giffard by ill-natured remarks. By my advice Lady Compton endeavoured to remain downstairs, but she would even in health have been wholly unequal to cope with Mrs. Giffard, who yet showed, I am bound to admit, the greatest deference and attention to the poor invalid whenever she appeared. It was impossible to complain of her manner, nor was there anything in her behaviour towards Sir Robert that would have justified even the interference of a near relative like myself."

"Pray, madam, have pity on my suspense. I am on thorns at present. In all you have hitherto told me I see nothing but what I might have requested; but fear I know not what."

"You will soon hear, unfortunately, Mr. Giffard, much of which I would gladly keep you in ignorance, only that it must be told. When the haymaking began, all the ladies staying here but your wife turned haymakers, and were out in the meadows for hours; nothing was spoken of but the pleasures of a pastoral life. Mrs. Giffard, with an affectation of singularity that drew all eyes upon her, took no part in this amusement. You would have fancied her just the woman to have enjoyed such a sham Arcadia as Sir Robert Compton converted his fields into, and such a devoted Corydon as he desired to play to her Thyrsis. She never approached the hayfield, but retired to the most solitary and secret alleys in the garden, and Sir Robert, when he discovered her there, found her always in tears, and came to me for counsel. I could see that he fancied

that she had accidentally found out at length she returned his too evident passion, and was endeavouring with all her strength to avoid him, and remain as much as possible out of his society until your arrival enabled her to return home. I, on the contrary, attributed the change in her conduct to the most finished coquetry, and believe firmly to this hour that her reserve was assumed, and that she intended it to act as a lure to draw him to his destruction."

"Permit me to interrupt you for a moment, Lady Compton. Yourself and your nephew were equally wrong. He was an errant coxcomb, and you were equally unjust in the conclusions you both drew from poor Honoria's conduct. As for Compton, I gave him credit for more sense, and would not have believed it possible he could have made such a miserable fool of himself. You neither of you remember that the haymaking was certain to recall by its associations the most painful images to my wife, whose love for her two cousins would bring them vividly to her remembrance at that season. The June following their deaths, when the scent of the new-mown hay reached her for the first time, she actually arose in the middle of the night, having been lying with her bedroom window open, and doubtless the perfume having come into her chamber with the night air, and, while still asleep, she dressed herself, opening every door with her own hand, left the house, walking to the very end of the garden and the brink of the river, where she lay down, and was found the next morning before she awoke on the edge of the bank."

"I imagine, from your repeating this incredible tale, that you already have been acquainted with the terrible scandal that has arisen from your wife's imprudence here, and expect me to believe that Mrs. Giffard was only walking in her sleep when she traversed the whole length of the picture-gallery with a lighted candle in her hand, in order to reach my nephew's room from her own chamber!"

Mr. Thomas Giffard seemed about to speak, but, checking himself, listened breathlessly to the remainder of the story.

"There has been for a day or two, I have since learnt, a laugh going through the servant's hall about King James's gallery being haunted; but they dared say such things only under their breath, and none but themselves knew what they alluded to; but last night a piercing scream rang through the side of the house where Robert sleeps alone during Charlotte's illness, and beyond the room he occupies, which is in the oldest part of the hall, and above the picture-gallery, in the north side, lie those occupied by his bachelor friends, and all opening one into the other. Hearing the cry, they came, half a dozen at once, into Robert's chamber, and found

Mrs. Giffard on the floor in a swoon. It is right to tell you that Robert has sworn, by all that he holds sacred, that he knows neither why nor how she came there. She sent me message after message before she left, but I declined to see her, and desired, for Charlotte's sake, she would at once leave the house, upon which Sir Robert swore he would attend her to Hearts, and, to finish all, she permitted him to do so. Mrs. Homewood lost no time in communicating these facts to her daughter, who instantly swooned; and, after a succession of fainting-fits, appears to be sinking rapidly, having so little consciousness that she has never even asked to see her infant, dearly as she loved it."

"I must at once return home, and call Sir Robert to account for this," said Thomas Giffard between his set teeth.

"By no means, Mr. Giffard; you must oblige me by remaining here until he comes back to give you an explanation of all that has occurred since you left. Poor Charlotte is in such an alarming state that he will certainly be back as fast as horses can bring him; and if she were to learn, as she surely would do from Mrs. Homewood, that you had gone to seek him in anger, it would confirm her worst fears, and she would die at once of terror. You can remain retired here if you will; but in any part of Fenwick Hall you will be alone, for our visitors have all left. By desire of the physician none remain but Mr. and Mrs. Homewood, and he has begged me to keep them from his patient as long as he holds out the faintest hope of her recovery; but I need not tell you Mrs. Homewood flew into a passion with me for barely hinting that Lady Compton was not kept sufficiently quiet to obtain any rest by day or night."

"If I believed one syllable against Honoria I would not stay under Compton's roof an hour; but I do not, and will not, only he shall pay bitterly for his own folly and presumption, and 'tis maddening to remember that unlucky habit of walking in her sleep should have led my wife into *his* chamber of all others," muttered the unhappy husband.

Lady Compton shook her head sadly, and Mr. Giffard rushed out of her presence in a rage.

"You too! even you! I thought you above such petty spite and folly. Poor girl! poor girl! how shall I ever clear her from this vile calumny; and those d——d footmen grinning at her too!"

How indeed! Every moment deepened the gloom which rendered Mr. Giffard incapable of calm reflection on a subject where to doubt was worse than death.

CHAPTER VI.

In which the reader will arrive at a conclusion.

WHEN Thomas Giffard passed out of the suite of rooms occupied by the Dowager Lady Compton, he strode through the grounds, instinctively directing his steps along those walks that had the wildest and most deserted appearance. There he paced rapidly backwards and forwards until the thin crescent moon rose in the fading west. Hurrying back to the hall, he inquired whether Sir Robert Compton had returned, and learnt that he had not. Upon hearing this his heart sank, and entering the chamber he had slept in before he left, he locked the door without summoning the attendance of his valet. Then he began to ask himself whether Honoria was indeed the fond and faithful creature he had believed her when she sank to sleep there with her head upon his shoulder. As he threw himself without undressing upon the vacant couch and pressed his burning brow against the cold pillows, her exquisite beauty presented a thousand disturbing images to his troubled memory; and as he recalled at the same time Sir Robert Compton's intense appreciation of her loveliness, he ground his teeth as he cursed his blind, besotted folly in leaving his wife under the care of his friend.

None but himself knew the agony of the silent sleepless hours of that long and lonely night. Every phase of every passion assailed him by turns.

Towards morning Mr. Giffard rang his bell; but when his servant tried the door he found it locked, and heard his master hurriedly asking why he disturbed him at such an unreasonable hour, and desiring him at once to return to bed. Mr. Giffard was a peculiarly kind and gentle master, but his manner appeared on this occasion to be so harsh and peremptory that the man retreated in haste. An hour or two later Mr. Giffard rang again, and asked whether Sir Robert had returned. He was informed that he had, but was now retiring. Mr. Giffard upon this desired a message might be taken to Sir Robert requesting his immediate presence. The man in a few minutes returned with Sir Robert's answer that he would be with Mr. Giffard instantly.

Sir Robert threw a dressing-gown on and followed at once. It seemed that Mr. Giffard knew whose were the steps approaching, for as Sir Robert walked through the bed-room into the dressing-room, he heard his friend say, "Compton, come in. Let me die in your arms."

Inexpressibly alarmed, Sir Robert Compton hurried forward and was in time to receive Mr. Giffard, but unable to support a

weight beyond his strength to sustain, he allowed him to fall to the ground. A stream of blood gushed from the wound Mr. Giffard had made in his neck, and he died instantly. A sharp penknife with which he had severed the jugular vein was firmly grasped in his right hand, and the cut was but an inch in width.

There was too much stir and excitement in the household for its unfortunate young mistress to be long kept in ignorance of the event, which as it was told by one to another in swift succession paled every awestruck face.

Mrs. Homewood remarked that uncertainty was harder to bear than the worst news, and acquainted her daughter at once with the suicide of Thomas Giffard. After hearing her account of the dire catastrophe, the faint hope the poor lady had hitherto clung to of *his* clearing up the dreadful mystery that overhung his wife's conduct was instantly destroyed, and with it the frail hold the weak creature had of life. The grief of the worthy brewer and his wife was so pathetic in its simplicity and intensity, that even the Dowager gave them her tenderest sympathy. Herself a mother long since bereaved of all her children, she knew how little could be done to soothe the grief of parents over whose last hope the tomb had closed. But her great anxiety was how to comport herself consistently towards her nephew. As a Christian she felt that he held his head too proudly and spoke too angrily to hope for pardon, until his spirit bowed itself to correction. As a loving relative remembering Sir Robert as a noble, winning child; a bright, earnest boy; a brave, engaging youth; a gallant man of stainless honour and unquestioned truth,—she longed to believe the reiterated assurance he deigned to make *only to her,* of perfect innocence in all but irrepressible admiration of Mrs. Giffard's beauty. The doubts the aged lady calmly and gravely advanced when her nephew assured her Honoria was free from all reproach, Sir Robert met with fiery denials and fierce contradict.ons. He pardoned these imputations when suggested by the Dowager Lady Compton's still recurring uneasiness upon the subject, but he allowed no one else to cast a stone at his now widowed and sorrowing first-love; and he fought three duels before the year of mourning was half out, in defence of Honoria's sadly-tarnished name.

Only one other person in the world asserted that Honoria was the innocent woman she desired to be thought—this was her sister, Hester. She had uttered no reproach when she found herself left at Hearts in solitude, to meet the return of the anniversary of her beloved Roger's death, to hear the rushing of the rippling waters that had closed over her lovers, to inhale the perfume of the hay, bringing back so vividly the memory of her last day of happiness, her first of acknowledged and happy love—a day of days that was

destined to stand alone in her life. To sit and play with her sister's children, and perforce be made to share apparently in their joy at the sunshine, the flowers, the melody of the birds, and the warmth and light that seemed a renewal of nature as the summer unfolded each day fresh beauties in the calm landscape around.

While fulfilling simple duties, Hester was rewarded for her unpretending resignation by a thousand sweet and unselfish pleasures.

When Honoria's widowhood shut her from all society, her proud breast became a prey of remorse. No one stood now, as her husband had done, between her and disgrace. She knew at length all he had so carefully concealed from her.

"Cold and mean, and secret and cowardly," she had called him, with her false, disloyal lips while he yet lived.

Of what avail was it, now that he was dead, to know that he had been none of these things? There were other moods, when Thomas Giffard passed wholly from his wife's mind.

Sir Robert Compton had returned to the military life he ought never to have quitted. Honoria would have given a great deal to have known with what feeling he regarded her. She heard of the duels he had fought for her, and thinking a man would hardly risk his life again and again for the honour of a woman to whom he was indifferent, she expected, after the expiration of a year, that he would return to Fenwick Hall, but she expected in vain.

The Dowager Lady Compton resided there in charge of the heir, and thither came frequently Mr. and Mrs. Homewood to spend a few days with their grandchild; but of Sir Robert Compton's movements Honoria could learn nothing whatever.

It is impossible to exaggerate her anger and mortification, which she felt the more bitterly because she dared not confess it even to her sister.

When she had been almost two years a widow, and still Sir Robert Compton remained abroad with his regiment, her breast became so filled with vain longings to see him again, that, neither sleeping nor waking, could she know any peace.

"He is dearer than Roger ever was!" she murmured, as she marked the second anniversary of her unhappy husband's death by throwing off her weeds.

Was it poor Thomas Giffard of whom she was thinking? A few more weary weeks and a letter was brought her that renewed every hope, called back the colour to her cheeks, the spring to her footsteps, the light to her eyes, and the bounding vigour to her pulse.

Honoria kept the contents of the letter secret, but Hester recognised the handwriting, she was not, therefore, surprised when,

a few days afterwards, Sir Robert Compton rode up to the door; but snatching one of her darlings by either hand, she hurried off with them to her own room. She remembered Sir Robert Compton's extreme fondness for children, and had no mind he should caress those of whose father's death he had been, however innocently, the cause.

When Hester saw Honoria after Sir Robert's departure she noticed that her sister's face was pale and tear-stained. The long-desired interview had evidently caused her far more pain than pleasure. How could it fail to do so if one spark of feeling remained in her callous, selfish heart?

Nevertheless, Hester learnt in a few minutes that Honoria had received an offer of marriage from Sir Robert, and had accepted it. More she was not told.

But, when the wedding was over, Sir Robert left his bride at the church-door; unmoved by her passionate grief at his departure, he placed her almost inanimate form in a carriage beside Hester, to whom he held out his hand to say good-bye, with such an earnest expression in his pleading face that Hester, for the first time since Thomas Giffard's death, forgave him his share in it.

"Honoria, when she accepted me, consented that I should act in the manner I am about to do. My regiment is on the eve of embarkation for America, and I have barely time to rejoin it. After all that has passed we could never expect happiness in each other's society; but in the far west it will soften my remorse to know that I have made my friend's wife all the reparation in my power for the injury I have done her. As Lady Compton much of the venom of the slander will cease to annoy her."

He could not have inflicted a more terrible punishment on Honoria, who had believed her charms would at the last moment have obliged her bridegroom to relinquish his chivalric purpose, and give her the substance instead of the shadow; but her beauty had not the slightest influence on the resolution he had formed of marrying the woman whose happiness he had unintentionally blasted.

His conscience pricked him too sharply for Thomas Giffard's death for him not to shudder, while they held each other's hands by turns on plighting their troth; and even as he slipped the wedding ring on her finger, he swore secretly never while he lived to touch her soft, fair flesh again, but to take horse the instant the marriage service was over, and never rest until he had put both land and sea between himself and temptation. Besides, he had made a solemn vow, as he looked on the infantine beauty of Charlotte's soft girlish face in death, that he would atone for his neglect of her by leading henceforth a solitary life.

Thus it came to pass that Honoria, who, from her birth, had sought only her own happiness, and whose whole aim had been selfish enjoyment, became, while still young and beautiful, a most miserable and fallen creature; while Hester, who had lived entirely for others, found, in her utter forgetfulness of self, that peace which the world cannot give.

CITY OF GLASGOW BANK SKETCHES.

THE FOREMAN OF THE MILL.

ONE day last week, when wind and rain,
Were wrestling hard on hill and plain,
And, blending with them, blinding sleet,
On many a head did wildly beat,
I met a man upon whose face,
The curious eye at once could trace
A history of care and grief,
Which scorn'd to ask, but sought relief.
His thin, white lips evinc'd a will,
Which passions voice at once could still;
His brow was open, clear, and high,
And Thought enthroned sat in his eye.
Upon his back he bore a load,
Which made him rest oft on his road,
And, though the wind did rudely blow,
And on him fell both rain and snow,
He struggled hard till faint he fell,
Beside a deep, unfrozen well:
"Water," he cried, "my sight me fails,
I see a Phantom ship with sails,
And swift she glides across the sea,
That is as black as black can be."
With water quick I laved his lips,
And when had passed a dread eclipse
Of Reason, with faltering voice and slow,
He told the story of his woe.

"I was the Foreman of a Mill,
Where now a thousand wheels stand still,
Which textures wove of every hue,
From deepest black to brightest blue,
They spun the robes in which the bride
Stands blushing, at the bridegroom's side;
And help'd to veil the hideous dead,
And to the living furnished bread.
For forty years they went their rounds,
And filled the air with cheerful sounds,
Nor ceas'd, save on that sacred day
When Labour rests to think and pray.
When stopp'd the bank, closed was the mill,
And all its wheels at once stood still;
Unfed, the fires did quickly die,
And furnace heav'd its last, deep sigh.
But worse! three hundred men, and more,
Were doomed to beg from door to door,
And wander, now as you see me:
Some on the land, and some on sea.
Of these, some maniacs have become,
And some, with palsy struck, are dumb;
In prisons, some, for debt are lying;
And some, in hospitals are dying;
And some, unto the grave have gone,
And never will on earth be known.
My master's fate was worse than mine—
He fled for solace unto wine,
And drank so deeply, that he raved,
Wept, laughed, danced, sang—and crav'd
Of laudanum, a heavy dose
To soothe his deep and varied woes;
And, being denied it, seized a knife,
And from him took his load of life.
I still survive—but often think
It had been better that the link
Which binds the soul, at once had broke,
Rather than bear this crushing yoke,
Of want, and toil, and fear, and care,
Which white have made my once black hair.
All I tasted have this morn
Are some red berries of the thorn,
And these rent clothes give now no heat,
Nor do these shoes protect my feet,

Which, nipp'd by frost, and blist'rd sore,
Are raw and red with thick'ning gore.
But, worst of all, I bear within,
A load of guilt, remorse, and sin,—
For, I embrac'd in early life
That creed which teaches that this strife
With toil and care will shortly cease,
And Death bestow eternal peace.
Whereas, I found, while lately lying
Upon the snow, and supposed dying,
A light, intenser than that far,
Which ever stream'd from sun or star,
Upon me broke, and showed a world
Where all the spoils of time are hurl'd,
And, stripp'd of flesh, our spirits dwell
Each in its self-built Heaven or Hell."
"My friend," said I, "sad is thy fate,
And since the hour is dark and late,
Come with me to that house whence streams
A ruddy light, in flickering gleams,—
And food, and warmth, and sweet repose,
Shall soothe till morn thy many woes."
No answer came; gone was his breath;
And on his face the seal of Death."

Manse of Athelstaneford. W.

ANOTHER WHITSUNTIDE HOLIDAY.

AGAIN, in May, we start by the Queensboro' and Flushing route; detained by a week of "stiffish breezes," we take advantage of the first lull, and are carried over a perfectly calm sea to the coast of Holland; thence, by train, through the flat Dutch country, made brilliant now with spring verdure, hedges of golden broom, and patches of rose-coloured clover, to Kaldenkirche, the frontier town of Germany, where the usual ceremony of carrying the luggage from the train to the custom-house and back again, detained us some time. Our destination this year was Dresden, with a stop, on our way, at Cologne and at Berlin. Ten days were but a small allowance for such a trip, and not a few remarks were made before we started on the folly of attempting to do so much in so short a time; but, "let those laugh who win"—with but little fatigue or hurry we attained our object, and gained a very fair knowledge of the royal cities of Germany and Saxony.

From Neuss, where the fine old church of St. Quirinus bears both a tower and a cupola, we ran in an almost direct line south to Cologne; the Rhine flowed languidly on by us, as if hardened with the melted snow of early spring which thickened its waters. At Cologne the cathedral building was making progress—four hundred men working daily to finish it within the three years now named for its completion—much had been done since we saw it last year, the Emperor's gift, the great bell cast from the cannon taken in the Franco-Prussian War, was in position, the beautiful stone carving of the south entrance finished, but as yet there were no signs of the two towers which are intended to crown its western end. In St. Ursula's Church I visited for the first time the "Golden Chamber," into which are admitted the skulls and other relics of a select few of the Saint's virgin associates, encased in busts of gold and silver. Here, too, we were shown some rusty nails "from the true cross," and a broken alabaster jar, said to have held water at the marriage feast of Cana! In St. Peter's Church an old priest was catechising a large number of children, both boys and girls, candidates for the confirmation to be held on Holy Thursday; he walked up and down between the ranks, asking questions, and listening kindly to the eager replies of the children, few of whom were more than twelve years old.

From Cologne we started the next day for Berlin, crossing the iron bridge over the Rhine to Deutz. As we neared the next

station we saw, waiting to cross the line, a funeral *cortège*; a coffin lay in an open hearse, over it was spread a black cloth with a huge yellow cross extending its whole length, the hearse was followed by about twenty mourners on foot—we rushed on, making way for the passage of the dead.

By Essen, with the tall chimnies of Krupp's steel works, over a coal district, to Dortmund, where we did *not* see the lime-tree said to be still standing over the stone by which, from the fourteenth to the nineteeth century, the Supreme Court of the celebrated Vehmigericht held its sittings. Thence to Güterstoh, famous for hams, sausages, and a coarse rye bread called "pumpernickel." A French cavalry soldier's remark, that the bread was only "bon pour nickel," his horse, has been Germanised into this nickname. Crossing the river Leppe at Hamm we passed Bielefeld, where women were stretching on the grass long strips of linen; the town is the centre of the Westphalian linen trade, above rises the round tower of Sparenberg Castle, originally a fortress of the Guelphs, now a prison; Minden, with the river Weser, and its undulating mountain scenery; Hanover, no longer a royal city; and so on to Stendal, where the wind blew cold, and the clouds hung over the sandy plains that stretched out for miles before we reached our journey's end, and found ourselves, after travelling ten hours and a half, in the handsome, roomy station of Berlin. Without delay our luggage was placed in a *droschke*, and we soon trotted along the paved streets by the Unter den Linden to our hotel.

The bright sunshine of the next day tempted us to Potsdam. A railway drive of half an hour, through woods of fir and silver birch, with three or four stations, round which handsome country houses are rising, took us to this town of palaces. It would be difficult to find another place in which, within the same limits, there are so many royal residences. Crossing the river Havel by the Lange Brücke, we drove first to Babelsberg, the Emperor's own country residence. Although he was hourly expected, and all was in readiness for him, even the fire lighted in his bedroom, we were admitted first to the grounds, where the Havel is broken into a series of beautiful lakes, bounded by hills and luxuriant foliage, then into the palace itself. Here, amidst all that was rich and luxurious, an air of home pervaded every room, almost every picture was a portrait or a scene from family history; in the Emperor's bedroom photographs of his children and grandchildren hung around his dressing table, and pictures painted by the Crown Princess adorned the walls.

It was pleasant to hear the tone with which the guide spoke of our Princess Royal; her rooms, hung with silk of bright tartan were shown to us, and as we remarked on their simplicity, the

woman brightened up and said: "*Ach! in alles ist sie so einfach, so lieblich.*" An exquisite fountain in white marble, representing the Archangel Michael, stands opposite the window of the Empress's boudoir.

From Babelsberg we went to the New Palace, which belongs to the Crown Prince, passing on our road the villa of Prince Frederick Karl, whose daughter was engaged to the Duke of Connaught. At the end of the garden, immediately on the road, is a magnificent fountain with many figures, all of richly gilt bronze. In the New Palace there is a grotto inlaid with shells and precious stones of marvellous beauty. From the New to the Marble Palace full of beautiful pictures and with balconies, whence we obtained exquisite views of the Havel and its windings; then to the Orangery, a palace more sumptuously adorned perhaps than the others, and kept for the reception of Royal Visitors from abroad. One room in the Orangery is devoted to specimens of Dresden china, each group of porcelain figures being mounted on a gilt basket; another room has the walls covered with copies of the most celebrated of Raphael's pictures.

But it is at Sans Souci that the interest of a visit to Potsdam culminates. The celebrated windmill, now become by purchase the property of the Emperor, stands on a vine-trellised eminence above the road to the Palace. All here tells of Frederick the Great; his statue stands at the head of the steps and terraces which ascend from the garden; not far from it are the graves of his dogs, amongst which it was his wish to be buried, his portraits, his books, with Voltaire's criticisms, his clock, stopped at the hour of his death, his spinet, the keys black, the flats and sharps white, in every room is some relic of the great Prussian King, who lies in a plain mahogany coffin behind the pulpit of the Garrison Church of Potsdam.

Berlin is a city of long, handsome streets, built at right angles, and having a vista of green at the end of most of them; for although it stands upon a dreary plain of sand, it has within it a general air of verdure, not only along its well-known avenue of lime-trees, but everywhere trees and flowers are interspersed with the buildings; and the Thiergarten, beyond the gates, surrounds the city with drives and walks more richly wooded than any of those in the parks of London. At the end of every street a mounted policeman, in a steel helmet, kept guard, but we saw few soldiers in the city. Statues, columns, and magnificent buildings are grouped together in Berlin; these abound more towards Unter den Linden than in any other part. Here are the residences of the Emperor and the Crown Prince, the Schloss and the Schloss Brücke with its bronze and marble statues, the old and new museums, the university, the

opera house and theatre, besides many residences of the embassies, handsome private houses and hotels. The bronze statue of Frederick the Great stands at the east end of the Linden, close to the Emperor's palace.

A mistake between this palace and the Schloss gave rise to a piece of German politeness. Two sentinels stood at the entrance—"May one enter?" was asked; "*Gewiss*," was the answer. The turning of a handle admitted into a magnificent hall, rich in carpets, statues, candelabra; a large fire burned in the grate—an equally magnificent footman in royal livery advanced, and admission was most politely refused—"*Der Kaiser kommt augenblick, jetz ist es unmöglich, später viel leicht kann die gnädige frau herein treten.*" It is doubtful whether a stranger, finding herself within the precincts of Buckingham Palace, would have been so courteously dismissed as we were from the Emperor's in Berlin.

In the Schloss, or Royal Palace, which is open to visitors, we found at the top of the marble staircase a depôt of large felt slippers, in which we all slid along the parqueterie floors through rooms exceeding each other in magnificence. In the White Saloon, a long sumptuous hall with a flooring and columns of white marble, there is a beautiful statue of Victory, by Rauch. In the Ritter Saal, where stand the silver chairs of the Emperor and Empress, the royal children of Germany are baptised; and close to it, in the chapel, the royal marriages are solemnised. This chapel is gorgeously decorated with gold, frescoes, and marbles; it has no organ, but under the dome is a golden gallery, in which a military band is stationed.

One day of our Berlin visit was devoted to the Museums. The only pictures I must mention in the galleries, and, I believe, they are considered the gems of the collection, are the side shutters, or side wings which originally were attached to the famous painting of the "Spotless lamb," by the brothers Van Eyck, which I had seen in the Church of St. Bavon, at Ghent. The shutters are painted on both sides, secular and holy subjects are curiously mingled; but there is the same minute finish in the work, and the same freshness of colouring, as in the centre picture at Ghent. One group, "Angels singing and playing," struck me as peculiarly beautiful and graceful. The old and new Museums are now connected by a passage from which rises a spacious double staircase of Silesian marble; the walls are adorned with six paintings by Kaulback, of great size and beauty, one of them, "The Destruction of Jerusalem," is an enlarged copy of a picture by him in the New Pinakstek at Munich.

Starting another day by the Brandenberg Gate, with its bronze car and horses of victory, we drove through the Frieden's Allee to

the König's Platz, where stands the Monument of Victory, a brilliantly-coloured column, surmounted by a golden figure. It was raised in 1873 to commemorate the victories of the Germans in their war with the French.

The Thiergarten begins at this point, and the road from Berlin to Charlottenburg runs through it. On one side, still called the "Zelten Weg," now stand handsome houses and streets. It was formerly an open space used for military manoeuvres, "and," said our English-speaking waiter at the hotel in explanation of its name, "had on it little houses made of linen." The other side consists of walks and bridle paths shaded by fine trees; amidst them winds the river Spree, crossed by pretty bridges, and made gay by bright-coloured, picturesque barges. The Palace of Charlottenburg stands in a pleasant garden, with an orangery and long avenues divided now and again by the windings of the Spree.

At the end of an avenue of pines is the Mausoleum, containing Rauch's monuments of Frederick William III., of Prussia and his beautiful wife Louise. Very exquisite are these statues of pure white marble, over them the blue glass, by which the Mausoleum is lighted casts a soft moonlight gleam. On either side of them rises a tall candelabrum, with figures of the Fates and the Muses.

In a storm of wind and rain, which came on suddenly, and washed the streets of Berlin, and frightened from them the gay groups we had met in the morning, we drove, at a little before six o'clock, to the railway station for Dresden. The express train took us there in about three hours. We had plenty of opportunity of testing the perfume of the German tobacco during the half hour we waited at the station, such a puffing, such a cigar fog was seldom seen, every mouth seemed a chimney, and very glad were we when the door at last opened and we found ourselves in the comparatively clear air of the platform. The first-class carriages of the Dresden railway are painted bright yellow, and were more comfortably arranged than any by which I have travelled. For miles and miles we drove through a flat, sandy country, interspersed at long intervals with pine woods to Grossenhain, where we saw a weathercock on the pole which supported the telegraphic wires. Here the scene changed to fields and meadows, large tracts covered with the yellow rape flowers, trees and brooks, pretty villages of red houses, and churches with slender spires enlivened the road. It was dark before we reached Dresden, we rattled over the uneven pavement to the Hotel de Saxe in the Neu Markt, in front of which is a fine bronze statue to Frederick Augustus II.

A rainy day was well occupied in the picture galleries of the Zwinger, containing, as they do, masterpieces of Rafaelle, Murillo, Rubens, and Correggio, besides those of almost every known painter

in the world. It would be idle in such a sketch as this to attempt anything of a description of the Dresden collection. From one room to another we went, revelling in the wondrous pictures that clothed the walls until our admiration was hushed and intensified as we found ourselves gazing, as do the angels beneath her, on the face of that pure Virgin who, with her Divine Son in her arms, is floating on a golden cloud towards the Heaven, made rich and glorious by innumerable cherubim. Truly, it is worth the journey to Dresden to sit for half an hour opposite Raphael's Madonna del Sisto. The English church at Dresden is near the large Bohemian railway station in a fine open part of the city. It was built by Henrietta Gosschen "in loving memory of her husband," and dedicated to God's service in 1869. It has a chime of bells, which guided and welcomed us as we walked through avenues of pink horse-chesnuts to the Wiener Strasse. Sunday in Dresden seemed almost English in its keeping; not a shop was open; no work in progress; and though the Bhrülschen Garten, a long terrace rising immediately above the Elbe, with cafés and shady seats, was crowded in the afternoon with gaily-dressed people, we heard no music, nor saw any of the diversions which attract and amuse Sunday visitors in other foreign cities. In the Hof-kirche we found, at 4 o'clock, about thirty very devout men and women kneeling at the flower-bedecked altars to the Virgin. The service was very much like a concert; the rich men-voices and the sweet treble of the young choristers were accompanied by an orchestra consisting of an organ, flutes, violins, and violoncellos. On leaving the church I came across a funeral procession so numerous, and in many particulars so different to any I had seen before, that it tempted me to follow it to the Trinitatis Kirchhof, a large cemetery about two miles out of Dresden. The procession was headed by four men, bearing long black poles hung with silver and black crape; three others came carrying palm branches and floral crosses; then, again, three, the centre man carried a large white satin cushion, on which lay crossed two palm branches; they were followed by the hearse, an open carriage of black and silver, drawn by six horses. The coffin was covered with a silver and black pall, and on it lay a perfect garden of exquisite flowers and palm branches; men in black and silver, bearing palms, walked by the side. After the hearse came about fifty men with flowers, some in pots, in their hands; then a hundred boys, and after them no less than five hundred young girls walking five abreast, mostly bare-headed, and carrying flowers and wreaths. Then eight carriages painted black and bright blue, and apparently empty. As this long procession went slowly through the city, an ever-increasing crowd of people followed it. From some of them I learned that the dead man was Herr Dress,

who had been for sixteen years director of the schools of Dresden, a man much beloved by all, "*so gut, so geliebter.*" I reached the cemetery a little while before the procession. From the gate to the grave, which was nearly in the centre of this large burial ground, there was scarcely standing room; but perfect order prevailed, and many were weeping as the coffin, a handsome oak case, richly decorated with silver, was carried by eight men along the path to its resting-place. There was no religious ceremony; three animated orations were made over the grave after the coffin had been lowered, and between each, men sang. After the last oration the choir of boys and girls took up the song; wondrously sweet their voices sounded in the open air, and as they sung they walked singly round the grave, dropping into it as they passed the flowers they carried. When all had gone by I looked into it, and nearly to the top it was filled with these loving memorials of Herr Dress's young scholars;—"*Ich war zwei jahre im Hause mit ihm, ich liebte ihn so viel,*" said a little sobbing girl, who had stood near me during part of the ceremony.

The next day was well filled; the morning found us at the Museum Johanneum, in which are the historical museum and the porcelain collection. The former, to quote the words of Murray, "contains all the weapons, offensive and defensive, of chivalrous warfare; all the trappings and accoutrements of the tournament and other wild sports of feudal ages," and in the latter are about fifteen thousand pieces of Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and French china, besides specimens of Dresden china from the earliest productions in the seventeenth century to those of the present day. In the historical galleries the sides of each room are covered with spears, knives, swords, hunting-horns, dogs' collars, &c., arranged chronologically and with great skill; the centre is peopled with a series of iron statues, on horse and foot, from the plainest suit of armour to the parade-rustung of a king, set thick with precious stones and plumed with scarlet ostrich feathers. After spending three hours in this and the magnificent China Museum, we determined, as we could not do both, to go *up* the Elbe towards Saxon Switzerland, instead of *down* it to Meissen, where is the great porcelain manufactury of Dresden. Several large steamers were lying below the bridges, and in a few minutes we were gliding in bright sunshine along the quiet waters of the Elbe. Our companions were numerous, the most picturesque of them were the laundresses, who, having fetched their week's work from the city, were returning to the villages on the river's bank, carrying the linen in baskets, very much like those used by the grape gatherers in the Rhone valleys. As usual, we zig-zagged from side to side, embarking and disembarking passengers at each village; as we

neared Pillnitz, the end of our voyage, the curiously-divided line of the mountains of Saxon Switzerland, came out dreamily in the distance; but this was all we now saw of a country with which another holiday may make us better acquainted. The chateau of the King, painted like a Japanese palace, is close to the river; it stands in pleasant grounds and has a good garden, but except some fine groups of old Dresden china in one of its rooms, there was not much to be seen within. Nurses and children, soldiers and peasants, were sitting beneath the trees in front of a restaurant, and with them we enjoyed the light beer and raspberry vinegar which a blythe landlady was dispensing in glass cups. The return steamer took us quickly back to Dresden, giving us time, however, to gain a very fine view of the city, as we approached it, with its churches, its theatre, and three handsome bridges. Stalls had been taken for us at the Opera House; so, after a somewhat hasty dinner, we went to see Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell." The scenery was good and the acting natural and energetic; the audience entered into the spirit of the play, and gave full, though sedate, evidence of their approval. The night when we left the theatre was soft and fine; the streets were lighted; the cafés on the banks of the Elbe threw bright illumination on her dark waters as they ran beneath the three double lines of light on her three bridges; and the people were strolling about, enjoying quietly the fine May weather.

Perhaps, as a collection, it would be impossible to find anything more wonderful than that contained in the Grüne Gewolbe, at Dresden,—ivory, gold, precious stones, mosaics, enamels, are here gathered together in eight rooms, each one exceeding the other in the richness and splendour of its contents; all attempts at describing them must be given up. I will only venture to mention the work in gold and jewels of Dinglinger,—who has been called the Saxon Benvenuto Cellini—as exceeding everything of the kind I have ever seen; one piece, "The Court of the Great Mogul," contains one hundred and thirty-two little figures of gold enamel, all attired in appropriate costumes, from the Emperor on his throne to the nearly naked slave, each so skilfully wrought that it requires little imagination to believe that at the touch of a fairy wand they would at once start into active life. Two hours in the Green Vault; two more in a second visit to the Zwinger Galleries; another two in driving across the bridge, by the Japanese palace with its green copper roofs, to the Neu Stadt, where the copper gilt equestrian statue of Augustus the Stark stands at the head of avenues not unlike a small Unter den Linden, and in a little shopping amidst the tempting china and photography of Dresden, and "backwards" was the word. The evening train carried us back to Berlin. A few hours the next morning enabled us to refresh our memories of the

royal city; and that night found us again in Cologne, on the eve of Holy Thursday. Ascension day broke bright and sunny; before eight o'clock, troops of miniature bridegrooms, in black, with a bow of white satin ribbon and orange blossom in their button-holes; and of little brides in white muslin, with wreaths and veils, attended by still smaller bridesmaids in white, with sashes of pink or blue, were on their way to the different churches to be confirmed. The bells rang out all over the city; at nine the great bells of the Cathedral called the faithful to High Mass, and the shops were closed for two hours. In a quiet room in the Rhein Gasse a few English assembled to celebrate their Lord's Ascension,—and all Cologne was in prayer.

Then began the holiday, the bells of the steamers clanged instead of those of the churches; shops opened and exhibited their bright wares, red and white flags floated from every house and church; the decks of the steamers filled quickly with gaily dressed people, and we found ourselves on board one on our way to Bonn. The low marshy banks of the river were made gay with the flags which hung from every point; even the huge holy-floss or rafts as they floated down the Rhine had their poles adorned with them. In two hours the Sieben Gebirge began to rise in the distance; the view opened on either side, village succeeded village at shorter intervals. At last a bend of the river and the seven mountains, the Drachenfels at the end with its ruined tower, Rolandseck opposite, and then Bonn, came into view. An hour there gave us time to walk to Beethoven's statue and the Munster, where a "Dank gebet" service was being held for those who had been confirmed in the morning; the centre of the church was filled with the young bridal-looking candidates and with priests in rich vesture; lilies and other flowers there were in profusion; the *coup d'œil* was really exquisite, and the devotion of the people, who filled the sides and galleries, appeared most fervent. We waited while a hymn, in which the whole congregation joined, was sung, and then were carried by the swifty, softly-running river back to Cologne, thence to take our departure the next day for Flushing. Our ten days' holiday was at an end; we had crossed five great rivers, we had run two-thirds of the breadth of Germany, but not a single tunnel nor level crossing had intercepted our way. We had seen much that was interesting and beautiful, and a quiet night's voyage brought us back to England with a grateful feeling that we had wasted neither time nor money in carrying out our trip to Berlin and Dresden.

HORACE:

A NOVEL.

BY MATTHEW SETON,

Author of "Sidera," "The Love of Lennox," etc.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH MR. GRANTLEY WINN IS ANNOUNCED.

"For, ah! the slight coquette she cannot love,
And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand years,
She still would take the praise and care no more."

Tennyson.

LADY RUMFORD and her cousin had spent most of the afternoon in shopping at Marshall and Snelgrove's, and drove up to the mansion in Berkeley Square at a few minutes past five. As they alighted from the carriage Lord Banks was entering the house. His daughter embraced him affectionately, and asked what had become of him for so long a time.

"It's a week to-day, papa, since I saw you last."

"Make him give an account of himself, Milly," said Lady Rumford. "You've been a shocking truant, Edward!"

"I've been down in Yorkshire, that's where I've been," said Lord Banks.

"You might, at least, have let us know you were going," said Lady Rumford, as she led the way to the drawing-room. "But you Radicals have such extrordinary ways. Even a seat in the hereditary chamber seems to do you no good. When did you return to your *den*?"

"To Bury Street?" said his lordship, laughing. "Only this morning."

"Did you see Aunt?" asked his daughter.

"I did, my love. I slept two nights at Rustleby. Your aunt told me to ask you when you meant to write to her again; and she hopes you are none the worse for London dissipation."

"Do I look so, papa?" laughed Mildred.

I can't say you do," said her father, gazing fondly on his daughter, whose cheeks wore the bloom of the rose. "London seems to agree with you as yet; but wait till we see you in August."

"Pooh!" said Lady Rumford. "What has August to do with it? You need never fear that Milly will grow pale-faced so long as she is under *my* wing."

At this moment visitors began to drop in, and in a quarter of an hour the room was pretty well filled with the clatter of voices. Lady Rumford encouraged her friends to call at this hour. She said she considered it peculiarly the time for social intercourse. She said that people's tongues usually wagged more freely during five-o'clock tea, and that she herself always felt more conversational at that hour. The light coquette, Miss Darby, and the incorrigible flirt, Miss Warboys, had been the earliest arrivals; the first accompanied by her brother, the second by her father. Miss Darby was the only daughter of a Conservative brewer; Miss Warboys was the youngest child of a Liberal cotton-spinner. The two young ladies were not very great favourites of Lady Rumford, who objected on principal to coquettes and flirts; but their respective fathers, the brewer and the cotton-spinner, were old friends of hers, and the daughters accordingly were always cordially received. There was one quality which she always put down to their credit.—they were never dumb, and they were never dull. Mr. Warboys, the Liberal cotton-spinner, took a seat on the sofa beside Lady Rumford, and both being politicians they were soon deep in a controversy about the India Bill. Miss Darby and Miss Warboys seated themselves on either side of Mildred, who was pouring out tea; while young Mr. Darby, who was about as nervous as his sister was self-possessed, secreted himself in a corner behind a curtain, and played with Lady Rumford's sky-terrier, "Floss." Miss Darby and Miss Warboys had both been at the ball at which Miss Moorhouse had been so obstinately besieged by Mr. Grantley Winn, so that the heiress was no stranger to them.

"How do you like living in London, Miss Moorhouse?" began Miss Darby.

"Oh, very much," said Mildred, enthusiastically. "I don't think I should ever tire of it. I shall be quite sorry when I have to leave Cousin Charlotte."

"How long are you going to stay with Lady Rumford?" asked Miss Warboys.

"Until the end of the Session; about the middle of August, I suppose," said Mildred.

"And after that, I suppose you will rusticate in Yorkshire with your father?" said Miss Darby.

"Yes; I shall probably go to Harrogate with him, unless I go to Italy with Lord and Lady Rumford, which they want me very much to do.

"Do you know Harrogate at all, Miss Moorhouse?" asked Miss Warboys.

"Oh, yes, very well. Papa and I and my aunt generally spend the autumn there. In fact, Harrowgate is the only watering-place I know at present."

"Do tell me, Miss Moorhouse, *please*," cried Miss Darby, eagerly; "is Harrogate really a nice place? I mean, is there lots of fun to be had there. I mean, you know, lots of gaiety—balls and assemblies, and so on? I hear so many different opinions about it. Most people say it's a capital place to go to, and others, like my cousin, Mr. Jarvey, say it's horribly slow; though, to be sure, Jarvey is scarcely safe to go by; he's so frightfully slow himself.

"We always found it very pleasant," said Mildred. "There is capital sea-bathing, which my aunt and I always enjoy."

"Yes, but what did you do in the afternoons and evenings?" asked Miss Darby. "You couldn't be bathing all day, you know; and I don't suppose you amused yourself every afternoon by wandering on the sea-beach shore and picking up the shells of ocean. Wasn't there anything to go to in the shape of a dance at night?"

"Oh, plenty of dancing to be had, if you liked," said Mildred. "In the afternoon we generally went a drive, or else papa and I took a ride. Sometimes we walked up and down the parade."

"Very nice!" said Miss Warboys. "I suppose you met lots of people? They say it's a great place for gentlemen.

"We met some very agreeable people; and I believe there were a good many gentlemen there, though we ourselves made acquaintance with very few."

"Oh!" cried Miss Warboys.

"Ah!" exclaimed Miss Darby.

"I must say I do enjoy being at a sea-side place where there are plenty of people," said the first young lady; "especially if there is a fair sprinkling of the male sex."

"So do I," exclaimed Miss Darby. "I quite agree with you, Miss Warboys. What a difference gentlemen make to a place! It's not the same at all without them. We went one year to a little country place in Wales, where there seemed to be nobody but a host of gossipping cats of old maids; not a creature in trousers to be seen except the rector and his curate. It *was* slow, I can tell you. I felt as desolate as Robinson Crusoe; and I *was* so bored."

"You are fond of dancing, are you not, Miss Moorhouse?" asked Miss Warboys.

"Oh, very!" said Mildred, warmly. "At least, that is to say, when I have a good partner."

"Or a good talker," said Miss Warboys.

"That depends," said Mildred, smiling. "He must be a very good talker, indeed, to make up for bad dancing, in my opinion."

"I saw you dancing with young Grantley Winn at Mrs. Bracebridge's ball the other night," said Miss Darby. "I'm sure he can talk twenty to the dozen."

"He has plenty to say for himself, certainly," said Miss Moorhouse, laughing.

"What did you think of him, Miss Moorhouse?" asked Miss Warboys.

"In what way? Do you mean as a talker or a dancer?"

"I mean, in the first place, as to his looks."

Miss Moorhouse smiled and gave a little shrug to her shoulders. "Not much," she said. "I think him altogether very plain."

"Plain!" exclaimed the light coquette and the incorrigible flirt, in one voice. "Oh, *Miss Moorhouse!*"

"Why, you don't mean to say that either of you consider him good-looking?" cried Milly in astonishment.

"I consider Mr. Grantley Winn not only good-looking, but handsome," said Miss Darby. "I do think he has the loveliest complexion I ever saw in a man."

"In a doll, you mean, my dear," put in Lady Rumford, who had overheard the remark. "Grantley Winn is nothing but a painted doll. When I look at those hectic cheeks and thready fingers of his I expect every day to hear he has gone into a galloping consumption."

"I think he has a complexion which any girl might envy. I sometimes envy it myself," continued Miss Darby, without heeding the interruption.

"And his features!" cried Miss Warboys, with beautiful enthusiasm. "I think he has such sweet pretty features."

"So do I," said Miss Darby, with quiet decision.

"And his figure!" said Miss Warboys. "Not very tall, you know, but *so* neat."

"A finnikin little dancing-master," cried Lady Rumford, from the sofa."

"*Oh*, Lady Rumford!" exclaimed the coquette and the flirt simultaneously.

"Had Mr. Winn ever any eyebrows?" asked Mildred, smiling. "I generally notice these things in gentlemen; and it seemed to me as if Mr. Winn had lost his; or, perhaps, never had any to speak of"

"Quite right, Milly, quite right!" cried Lady Rumford, laughing loudly. "Grantley shaved them off in despair of finding anything else on his face to shave."

"Miss Moorhouse, I'm ashamed of you!" said Miss Darby, looking completely shocked.

"Miss Moorhouse, I'm afraid your experiences in Harrogate have taught you to be satirical," said Miss Warboys, with a knowing air.

"At any rate, Miss Moorhouse, you must allow that Mr. Winn is a beautiful dancer!" said Miss Darby

"Yes, I admit he dances very well."

"Better than any of your Harrogate partners?" said Miss Warboys.

"Oh, dear, no," replied Mildred, quickly. "I don't admit that at all. There seems to me nothing *wonderful* about Mr. Winn's dancing."

"Milly, you perceive Miss Warboys is not altogether my country cousin, though she has lived most of her life in it," put in Lady Rumford. She has had her little experiences of the world. But now, seriously, Mr. Warboys, when you speak of the India Bill do you mean to imply——

"Don't you think Mr. Winn is very nice to chat to, Miss Moorhouse?" asked Miss Darby.

"He chatters very well himself," said Milly, laughing.

"I believe you are going to be satirical again, Miss Moorhouse," said Miss Warboys. "I am sure Grantley Winn talks very well, and always manages to keep you alive."

"Or to kill you," laughed Miss Moorhouse.

"The emptiest young chatter-box that any one can imagine," said Lady Rumford. "I'm sure the other night at Mrs. Bracebridge's he bored poor Milly to death. She positively could not get rid of him; he stuck to her like a limpet; I never knew a young gentleman so determined not to take a hint; for, though by no means brilliant, I don't think he is quite so obtuse as not to see when he is not wanted."

"I noticed that he seemed to be paying you a great deal of attention, Miss Moorhouse," said Miss Darby, who, being a universal coquette, considered that the more of that kind of thing she could get, the more charming it was, even though it came from a beardless boy of twenty.

"I should have fancied you would have found him very good fun, Miss Moorhouse," said Miss Warboys, who, being a great flirt, though not a great heiress, found Mr. Winn occasionally a very seasonable resource.

Miss Moorhouse again gave that little shrug to her shoulders, and observed that, though Mr. Winn had amused her a little at first, his fun seemed to her somewhat poor.

"His wit is scarcely Attic," remarked Lady Rumford; "nothing in the world would put Grantley Winn out of conceit with himself, however. He has taken to coming here ever since he met Milly; and does, I do think,—poor young man!—verily believe that his presence is welcome. It is quite a wonder he has not shown himself this afternoon."

Hardly were the words out of her ladyship's mouth, when the door was thrown open, and a footman announced—

"Mr. Grantley Winn!"

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH MR. WINN'S HEIRESS FINISHES A LETTER AND EXPRESSES AN OPINION.

MAR.—An affectioned ass that can state without book, and utters it by great swarths; the best persuaded of himself, so crammed, as he thinks with excellences, that it is his ground of faith that all who look upon him love him. *Twelfth Night.*

"How d'ye do, Mr. Winn?" said Lady Rumford, as the young gentleman advanced to the sofa. "Has the world been using the man of fashion well or ill lately? And how has the man of fashion been using the world?"

"I fancy we're about quits, Lady Rumford," said Grantley, with his habitual grand air of self-satisfaction; "though the things a fellow's expected to do, and the duties he's expected to attend to in these days, come occasionally rather hard on him, you know."

"Poor dear man, I can quite understand it, and pity you from the bottom of my heart. I hope, however, you don't include a cup of tea at this hour among your hardships. I'm sure Milly feels as much compassion for you as I do, and will give you one in hopes of it's doing a little to soothe your fatigues and anxieties. What has the inexorable world been exacting from its devoted slave this morning, for instance? Several hours of diligent promenading in the Burlington Arcade, perhaps?"

"N—not exactly that. Not this morning, at least, you know, Lady Rumford," said the young gentleman, looking a shade disturbed as he thought of the events of the day up to that moment. He shook hands with his two admirers, Miss Darby and Miss Warboys, took a proffered cup of tea from the hands of Mildred, and seated himself as near as he could to the heiress, and as far as possible from Lady Rumford, within whose range he never felt entirely at his ease. At the same moment, two new arrivals were announced under the names of Mr. Walter Nugent and Mr. Carrisbrook. The first was a young barrister, who was said among the profession to be of great promise, although he had only lately held his maiden brief; the second was the amiable and fashionable private secretary of a great minister. Miss Darby immediately secured the barrister, and Miss Warboys the secretary.

"Been to any balls since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, Miss Moorhouse?" began Mr. Winn.

"No," replied the heiress, smiling amiably; "I have not

danced a single dance any where, nor been anywhere where there was dancing, since I met you at Mrs. Bracebridge's. I believe, Mr. Winn, you are the last person I danced with."

"Ah! I'm delighted to hear it," said the young heiress-hunter, his little hectic cheeks getting a deeper glow. "I naturally recollect that you were the last young lady *I* had the pleasure of dancing with. It was that kind of pleasure you don't forget in a hurry, you know; the kind of thing, you know, you remember to the very last day of your life. But I could hardly have dreamed of the happiness of your remembering it so well, too, Miss Moorhouse."

Here Mr. Winn's eyes bulged out in a very marked manner, and shot a most dangerous glance at Mildred.

"Does such a slight thing as that really give you happiness, Mr. Winn?" said Miss Moorhouse, laughing.

"It does, upon my honour! Only I don't consider it at all a *slight* thing."

"No?" said Milly, still laughing. "What! that I happen to remember you were the last person I danced with? Suppose I had been dancing somewhere since, and you not there, what then? In that case I should probably remember that some one else had been my partner."

"Oh! but, don't you know, it's so jolly for me to know that nobody else *was* your partner."

"Well, if the idea is so pleasant I would certainly cherish it," said the heiress, laughing again.

"It would be still more jolly for me to think, you know, that my having been your last partner was as pleasant an idea to *you*," said Grantley, with another exceedingly dangerous shot from the eyes.

"I don't think I said it was an unpleasant memory, did I, Mr. Winn? I fancy it was impressed upon me a good deal by the circumstances of the case. If you remember, I was tired, and didn't want to dance any more that evening; but at last I yielded to your persuasions."

"But you never repented doing so, did you."

"I wont say that I was less sleepy when we had finished," laughed Milly.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Winn, a little taken aback. "Upon my honour, I'm awfully sorry if I really tired you."

And then he thought to himself that his heiress was stupider than he had thought her at first.

"I think it is a little late in the day to be making apologies, any were ever needed," laughed Miss Moorhouse. "If it is any comfort to you, I may tell you that I have long ago recovered

from all fatigues. Is your conscience always so sensitive in these matters, Mr. Winn?"

"Well, no; I don't think it is. Don't fancy, you know, that my conscience has ever been exactly tender about anything. It depends, don't you know, who my partner is." Another telling shot from the eyes.

"In matters of conscience, Mr. Winn, you should be no respecter of persons," said Milly, with mock gravity, and meeting the eloquent eyes with an arch gaze, which made him think his heiress was stupider than ever.

"Are you going to Harrogate this year, Miss Moorhouse?" he asked, after contemplating a pattern in the carpet for some moments, and describing circles on it with his cane.

"Very probably; unless I go to Italy with Lady Rumford."

"Oh! I hope you will go to Harrogate."

"Yes? Why, Mr. Winn?"

"Oh! because, you know, I intend to go there myself."

"I see; and you want probably to have another opportunity of dancing me off my legs?"

"N—not exactly that; though, you know, I should like tremendously to have another chance of dancing with you."

"Then why do you so particularly wish I should go to Harrogate?"

"Well, don't you know, if you were there and I were there, why then, don't you see——"

"See what?"

"I should see more of you—we should see more of each other I mean, than—than—don't you know, if you were in Italy."

"I think we should, Mr. Winn. We should be very long-sighted people indeed if either of us could see the other from Harrogate to Rome, or from Rome to Harrogate."

The idea so tickled the heiress that her father, who at this moment applied for another cup of tea, wondered why her hand shook so perceptibly as she poured it out.

"I should see you probably every day—I mean, we should see each other every day at Harrogate," continued Mr. Winn. "People generally see a lot of each other there, don't they? Just, don't you know, as they do at other watering places."

"I believe they do. What then?"

"Well, then, I should say that would be awfully jolly—at least, for me. Of course, it would be jollyer still, you know, if I thought it was as jolly for you." Another rattling shot from the eyes.

"I think I should like to go to Italy this year, for a change," said Milly, turning her head a little aside to hide a smile. "I

know Harrogate so well now, and am beginning to get a little tired of it, though I enjoy the bathings very much. But Italy! Oh, I should so love to see Italy! It has almost been the dream of my life to visit Rome."

"Oh! ah! really, Miss Moorhouse? Go all the way to Rome? I always thought travelling about like that, and having to do so many things, must be an awful bore."

"*A bore*, Mr. Winn!" cried Milly, forgetting for a moment the remarkable person she was addressing. "What, the Vatican! the Colliseum!"

"Oh, ah, I suppose it's the correct thing to see them; latter by moonlight, I believe," said Mr. Winn, with that affected nonchalance which became him so well. "But what's the good of going all that way for the sake of some pictures and a few old stones? You can always see lots of pictures here in May at the R. A., you know; and as for ancient ruins, and all that kind of thing, are not there some Roman camps, or old monuments, or something of that sort, in Yorkshire? Take my advice, Miss Moorhouse, and stick to Harrogate and the bathing."

"It is very probable that I shall, however much my heart may rove to the 'few old stones,' as you so poetically call them," said Milly. "Papa is so fond of Harrogate, and so is my aunt; and they always like to have me with them when they go there. Have you ever been to Italy, Mr. Winn?"

"Can't say I have. Never fancied doing the Alps and avalanches, and Swiss châlets, and all that sort of thing; somehow never *could* persuade myself to become a Cook's tourist, don't you know. Expected to read up a good deal of 'Childe Harold,' 'Petrarch,' and all those other rhyming animals, aren't you? Don't believe, for a moment, I was born with a spark of poetry in me, Miss Moorhouse."

"I really don't believe you were, poor dear boy," was the inward comment of the heiress, which, nevertheless, she did not make public. "And you really are going to Harrogate this autumn, Mr. Winn?" she asked.

"Upon my honour, I mean to, Miss Moorhouse, if I think there is any possibility of meeting you there."

"But I really don't see how my going or not going can make the slightest difference," said Miss Moorhouse, demurely; and we must hope that she was not conscious of having told a tremendous fib. "You would find hosts of girls in Harrogate who could dance ten times better than me; and very pretty ones too."

"As to *looks*," said Mr. Grantley, with great emphasis, and bending his admiring regards intently on his heiress, "that might be a matter of taste."

"I suppose it might," said Milly.

"And as to dancing," continued the young gentleman, "that depends on the person, you know. Lots of things depend on this person or that person, don't you know? Places themselves sometimes depend on persons. Whether Harrogate was pleasant to me or unpleasant to me might depend on the person, you know."

"Or a great many persons, you ought to say," said Miss Moorhouse, innocently. "It is the general society of a place which usually renders it agreeable or the reverse. If you find certain people unpleasant, you are almost certain to find others who are not so. Harrogate is probably much the same as other places in that respect."

"Oh, but don't you know, Miss Moorhouse, when you go to a place where you know you are likely to meet a person you've seen and liked before,—well, then, you know, it makes all the difference to a place; give's it a kind of—what do they call it?—don't you know, a kind of fascination?" And as he spoke of fascination, Mr. Winn shot a glance of tremendous import out of his fascinating azure orbs.

"I quite understand you, I think," said Miss Moorhouse, looking simply at him with her own bright brown eyes. "You mean to say, that you would possibly find Harrogate pleasanter if you were occasionally to meet there a person like myself, whom you had known some time and looked upon as an old acquaintance? That certainly does make a difference sometimes. But, Mr. Winn, I should have thought that a gentleman with your experience of London—and I suppose I may say, of fashionable society generally—would soon have made himself at home in a place like Harrogate, and formed a host of friendships in no time."

"Oh, well, you know, as far as that goes, I dare say that I might," said Mr. Winn, delighted to find that his heiress was not so far gone in stupidity as to fail to recognise the genuine "man about town" when she saw him. "You see it does make an awful difference to that sort of thing when a fellow has seen something of life, and knocked about a good deal in society," he went on, with his grand experienced air; "he doesn't feel quite like a fish out of water, don't you know, as another fellow might in a new place. I daresay, Miss Moorhouse, you will understand that kind of feeling yourself at the end of the London season."

"I have no doubt I shall, Mr. Winn. I shall feel quite an experienced woman of the world. At present, I fear, I am a sad tyro. But if I go to Harrogate I don't see exactly how my newly-won experience is to benefit me. I know Harrogate so well that I could hardly feel like a fish out of water there, under any circumstances. I think I must really go to Rome, in order to test the knowledge I have gained during a London season,

"I hope to goodness you won't, Miss Moorhouse," cried the dangerous heiress-hunter, earnestly. "I hope you'll go to Harrogate with your father, Lord Banks; upon my word I do."

"And my aunt," added Miss Moorhouse, simply. "She likes sea-bathing as much as I do."

"Oh, ah, yes, and Miss Storks. You told me about her. She lives down at your place in Yorkshire, doesn't she? Rustleby, I think you called it?"

"Dear Rustleby!" said Milly, sentimentally. "I shall be quite glad to see it again. I'm so fond of the place."

"You must be, rather, I should say, Miss Moorhouse. There's nothing like a rattling good country seat in my opinion; with good shooting. I fancy Rustleby must be worth seeing?"

"It is not so very far from Harrogate. Papa and I often go to it when we are there. If you and I are at Harrogate this autumn, we might drive you over."

"Ah, thanks, very much! Shall be delighted, I'm sure!" cried Mr. Winn, with a triumphant beam on his face. "I want so much to have the pleasure of being introduced to Lord Banks."

"Papa is here now," said Milly. "That is he over there, talking to Mr. Warboys. They have got upon politics most likely, so I must introduce you another time."

"And Miss Storks, Miss Moorhouse? She'll join you at Harrogate, won't she? I want awfully to make acquaintance with Miss Storks, you know."

"*If* I go to Harrogate you shall, Mr. Winn," said Milly laughing.

"Ah, that is as good as settled, you know, Miss Moorhouse. You couldn't be so cruel as to disappoint a fellow *now*, you know." Another most alarming shot from the eyes which bulged so fearfully.

She was beginning to wonder within herself what grounds he could have for his very audacious assumption, when a clear and musical voice said close to her—

"I heard you mention Harrogate, Miss Moorhouse. I believe I once had the pleasure of meeting you there."

She turned her head quickly, and found that it was the young barrister whom Miss Darby had captured, but to whom that young lady's coquettish arts and conversation had been anything but congenial. Miss Moorhouse held out her hand to him as if it was some relief to her to escape for a little from Grantley; and said, with a slight blush, "I remember you quite well, Mr. Nugent. It must be more than two years now since we met. Have you been to Harrogate lately?"

"Since I saw you last I have only been there for a couple of days while on circuit."

He was the antipodes in everything of Mr. Winn. His face was illumined with intellect and sympathy; his deep-set grey eyes, with their long lashes, had an expression of gentle pensiveness which at once created interest; and there was a charming modesty in his manner which, far from giving an impression of timidity, spoke of that latent power which almost always accompanies an uncommon intelligence. He spoke a few more words to Mildred, and then rose to go. Then followed a general exit. The private secretary departed with Nugent, whom he knew; while Mr. Grantley Winn followed in company with the coquette and the flirt, and wondering much who that "smooth-tongued fellow was, d——n him!"

Nevertheless, Mr. Winn joined his friend Mr. Grossmith at Snagg's billiard rooms, in the firm and jubilant conviction that that steady and terrific series of shots from his irresistible eyes had answered every purpose, and that his heiress was as good as won. What could that marked proposal to drive him over to Rustleby mean but a delicate avowal of tender sentiment?

"She's as good as mine, Fred," he cried, poking his friend in the ribs with his cue. "You'll lose your bet, old fellow, to a certainty!"

Miss Darby and Miss Warboys, who had been watching with intense interest the heiress's treatment of their favourite, left the house with the conviction that Miss Moorhouse must be, after all, an artful puss; for that, after pretending to think little of Mr. Grantley Winn, she had flirted with him and encouraged him in the most barefaced manner, and was evidently, if the truth were known, quite smitten by him.

Were we to take the liberty of peeping over Miss Moorhouse's shoulder, as she sits writing a certain letter up in her bedroom, perhaps a little light might be thrown on her feelings in this matter.

"Cousin Charlotte," she says, after everybody has disappeared, "I think I will go and finish my letter to Auntie, to be in time for this evening's post."

And this is how she finishes it:—"You remember the young Mr. Winn I mentioned to you in my last, and how he bored me so much at Mrs. Bracebridge's ball? He popped in this afternoon to five-o'clock tea, and talked to me, and to no one else, for nearly three-quarters of an hour. You really should see him and hear him, Auntie! You cannot imagine what rubbish he talks, and how frightfully conceited he is! I do really believe he would like to make love to me, if he had the opportunity! You should see the way he looks at me sometimes; he has pale-blue goggle eyes, which sometimes bulge out of his head like those of fishes.

I wonder what you would say if you saw him? I think you would be very angry with him; but, I assure you, you would have no reason whatever to be anxious on my account. It is true he is sometimes so ridiculous that I cannot resist amusing myself with him, and I am afraid you would almost say that I wanted to flirt with him. That Mr. Nugent, whom we met at Harrogate more than two years ago, has been here also. I did not observe him at first, but just as everybody was going away he came and spoke a few words to me. He is so gentlemanly and unaffected, and such a contrast to Mr. Winn, who seems to me a perfect empty-headed puppy."

CHAPTER XIV.

SIR HAROLD EXPRESSES HIMSELF PARTIAL TO THE BLACKSMITH'S TRADE.

"Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands."

LONGFELLOW.

THE fact of there being such things in this world as young gentlemen about town, money-lenders, heiresses, and heiress-hunters, must not let us lose sight of our little hero, as he grows physically of more importance every day down in Warwickshire. The great occasion of his partaking of the sacrament of baptism is within one day of being celebrated. Wintoun Manor is alive with good company, and Mrs. Plumtree, amid her multifarious duties, wonders when it will be empty again. Nevertheless, that most venerable and most excellent housekeeper is full of joy at all the festive bustle, and will feel regret rather than elation when the guests begin to depart. It is enough for her faithful old heart that all this commotion is caused by the circumstance of there being an heir to that honse in which she has dwelt so long, and which she loves so well. It has been impossible for her to pay another visit to Mrs. Marrowfat, but she has not forgotten her old friend, nor Patty, nor Patty's Fanny; and various delicate and delicious dishes have found their way from time to time to the lodge from that traditional paradise of good things, the housekeeper's room, besides many a mysterious packet of extremely acceptable baby-linen. The heir of Wintoun has meanwhile been growing—growing steadily in all kinds of ways, growing longer, growing broader, growing fatter, growing rounder, growing mentally richer, and, above all things, growing noisier. His crows, when delighted, surpass those of the prize game-cock at the farm; his squalls,

when displeased, are more appalling than those of the dying pig in the slaughter-house. His father surveys these manifestations of daily development with an ecstacy which might be imagined but not described; and his mother, whom Dr. Roebuck declares is as well as ever she was in her life, is equally transported. Doubtless Mrs. Plumtree is not a whit behind in her emotions of joy; and, as for the nurse, she pronounces every day a more earnest benediction on every part of her thriving charge's body. On the afternoon of the day immediately preceding the christening, Sir Harold Winn and his father-in-law, Lord Clackmannan (who with his wife had arrived from Cockenzie Castle), took a walk to Netherbrook to post their letters. Lady Winn had, at the same time, driven some of her guests into the same town, to do some small things in the way of what country ladies are found of calling "shopping;" a process which usually consists of entering the shop of some humble linen-draper, sitting at his counter for half an hour, inspecting and pronouncing on most of the articles in the shop, buying a quarter of a yard of ribbon at 5d. per yard, half a yard of netting at 8d. per yard, a quarter of a yard of tape at 1d. per yard, carefully securing the prodigious packet, and finally defraying on the spot the bill of 5½d. The carriage with the party of purchasers overtook the baronet and the peer half way between Netherbrook and Stradford, and Lady Winn intimated to her husband that, if Clackmannan was tired and wanted a lift, Clackmannan could be accommodated with a seat on the rumble, as they could easily manage to make room for Maria or Harriet Winn inside. However, Clackmannan did not feel in the least fatigued, and preferred walking the rest of the way with his brother-in-law.

"Clackmannan," said Sir Harold, as they came to the little village of Stradford, which was part of the Wintoun property, and lay close to the gates of the park, "don't you enjoy a blacksmith's forge?"

The Stradford smithy was situated at the extreme end of the village, and the baronet had paused before it to gaze at its roaring fire, and to listen to the music which Joe Ribstone and his son Jack were making upon its harmonious anvil.

"The harmonious blacksmith, eh?" said Lord Clackmannan, laughing.

"Well, now, don't you like watching him?" said Sir Harold.

"I do," said his lordship. "If it is a weakness, I own to it."

"Gad! I never said it was a weakness," said Sir Harold. "Far from it; it originates, to my mind, in a love of the pic-

turesque—what can be more picturesque than the scene before us? that white furnace, the contrasting blackness of the background, and those two stalwart fellows looking like two veritable sons of the Cyclops as they rain their tempestuous blows on the heated bar? I don't know how it is, Alexander, but, of all the trades which involve manual labour, I have always fancied the blacksmith's."

"And, to tell you the truth, Harold, I have never fancied any one of them in particular," said Lord Clackmannan, with a laugh. "This is wonderfully picturesque, as you say; but I fancy most of the poetry would vanish the moment you were transformed into the actual grimy smith. For instance, how is it possible to keep yourself clean? Look at those fellows—how ever will they get themselves washed?"

"How do chimney-sweeps manage?" said Sir Harold.

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Nor I either," said the baronet. "My impression is they never wash at all, at least until they retire from business. I always looked on them as a kind of home-made negroes. A blacksmith is different. He always looks polished and respectable on Sundays."

"Listening to his daughter's voice in church, eh!" said Lord Clackmannan. "You've got Longfellow running in your head, Winn."

They stood and watched the two Ribstones shoeing a horse.

"Whose animal is that, John?" asked Sir Harold of the son.

"It's Farmer Anscombe's, Sir Harold."

"Ah, a fine brute he is, too! What a shoulder! Has Anscombe had him long, do you know?"

"Only since Michaelmas, Sir Harold. He's a regular one to go, but an awful one to shoe."

"So I see," said the baronet, as the animal threw his ears back and lashed out vigorously in Sir Harold's direction. "I heard some time ago that you were going to be married, John," he continued. "Is it true? And who is your sweetheart, if I may ask the question?"

"I aint got a sweetheart now, Sir Harold," said Jack a little mournfully, as he took one of the horse's legs in his lap and bent over it to hide his rising colour. "I had once, and once I thought it possible I might have been married ere now; but that's all past."

"Not jilted, I hope, John?" said Sir Harold.

"Something as bad as that, Sir Harold, if it weren't something worse," said the young smith, driving a nail into the horse's shoe with a will.

"You're a love-sick fool, Jack, that's what *you* are," said the old smith, who had heard him. "We'll put you into a valentine and post you before the fourteenth—that's what we'll do."

"Be a man, John, and it'll all come right, I've no doubt, whatever the obstacles may be at present," said Sir Harold, cheerily.

And then, perceiving that the matter was invested with some delicacy, he took his father-in-law's arm and walked away. A little farther on they met Martha Wren, who dropped a curtsey.

"Ah, Martha!" said Sir Harold, "how's your grandmother? And how are you yourself? You've been ill, haven't you, since you came home from London?"

"Grandmother's much as usual and I'm very well, thank you, Sir Harold," said Patty, looking very modest and scarlet.

"But haven't you been unwell? You've lost the rosy cheeks you had before you went to London."

"I was a little poorly some little time ago, Sir Harold; but I'm quite well now, thank you, Sir Harold," stammered Patty, full of confusion, but nevertheless taking a peep at Lord Clackmannan, whom Mrs. Plumtree had spoken to her about when she went to the house to fetch an extra bit of finery for Fanny.

"Well, there's nothing like Warwickshire air, Martha, for making people strong," said Sir Harold, kindly; "and, remember whatever you want in the way of wine or anything else for getting your strength up, you have only to come up to the house, and Mrs. Plumtree will look after you."

"Thank you, Sir Harold," said Patty, dropping another curtsey and glad enough to hurry away.

"Now, Clackmannan," said Sir Harold, stopping short after they had passed the village church, "I'm going to show you a natural curiosity, if you have no objection."

"None whatever," said his lordship. "What is it?"

"You see this house?"

"I do. I should take it for the vicarage."

"That's exactly what it is, and I mean to introduce you to the vicar and his sister. They're as great a pair of oddities as ever you beheld in your life."

BRIEF AND VARIOUS.

EDWARD KELLY AND DR. JOHN DEE.

At the latter end of the XVIth century a notary of the name of Talbot, born at Worcester in 1555, had attained distinction by his skill and erudition in deciphering ancient documents. His talents in establishing old titles, and dragging out almost obsolete claims from the dust of ages, brought him into great repute. Unfortunately he was an adept not only in perusing old writings, but also in imitating them. This latter faculty exposed him to dangerous solicitations, and he was unable to resist the temptations placed in his way of falsifying titles or of fabricating such in the interests of his clients. Convicted of these malpractices, he was expelled the City of Lancaster (or some say London), where his business was carried on, and it is even said that he had his ears cut off.

Taking refuge in Wales, he concocted a story of his having discovered in a village inn in the mountains a work in old Welsh, which had reference to the transmutation of metals. He further stated that it had been obtained from the tomb of a Bishop of the Roman Church, buried in the neighbourhood, and whose sepulchre had been profaned in the search for treasure. With the book were also two ivory balls, one of which, being broken, was found to contain a heavy red powder, the other contained a white powder and was left as it was. Talbot was an accomplised archivist and practised paleographer, but he knew nothing of chemistry, so he applied to a more worthy and a more learned man, but one whose weakness for alchemical mysteries were well known—the celebrated Dr. John Dee. The doctor invited his correspondent, who had assumed the name of Edward Kelly, to come to London, which he did, and the powders were examined at a jeweller's, and found to be gold, so dissimulated by chemical combination as to be capable of reproducing the phenomena attributed to the philosopher's stone.

The mystic and the mystifier, for some good reason or another, deemed it best to carry on their researches in Germany (some say in Poland), and in 1585 we find them at Prague, in Bohemia, whose Emperor openly protected pretenders to alchemy. Disregarding the advice of his friend and mentor, Edward Kelly led a life of great ostentation and extravagance. Nothing was spoken of in the city but his extraordinary profusion and his wondrous secrets. As an act of pure kindness, he manufactured small specimens of gold

and silver for his acquaintances, especially those who were rich, titled, or in a high position. His greatest exploit occurred at the house of the imperial doctor, Thadeus de Hayek (Agecius), where, with a single drop of red oil, he converted a whole pound of quicksilver into gold, and at the bottom of the crucible was also found a small ruby, which came, he asserted, from the superabundance of philosophical stone used in the operation.

This wondrous experiment repeated from mouth to mouth, and vouched for by serious men, especially by Nicholas Burnaud, another learned doctor, at that time residing in Hayek's house (*Gassendus de Metallis—Recreatio mentalis—Libavii Censura Senteniarum Scholæ Parisiensis*, &c.) had the effect of his being summoned to the court of Maximilian II., where he was well received, and where he repeated his experiments with great success. The Emperor was so delighted at the supposed discovery of the philosopher's stone, that he actually created the imposter a Marshal of Bohemia.

Such sudden distinction conferred upon an adventurer did not fail to excite envy and jealousy at the court. Having ventured, then, in a moment of vain-glorious excitement to declare that he could produce the powder which constituted the basis of his operations, his enemies took advantage of his indiscretion to point out to the Emperor all the benefit that would be derived from the knowledge of such a secret. The reply of an adept would have been very simple—that it requires gold or silver to reproduce gold or silver. Kelly was ordered to fabricate several pounds of the philosophical powder for His Imperial Majesty under surveillance, and failing to do so, he was imprisoned in the château of Zobeslau.

In such an extremity he had recourse to his old friend, Dr. Dee, and confiding in the hope that the learned doctor would initiate him in the secret, he promised, if liberty was granted to him, to impart it to the Emperor. He was accordingly allowed to return to his friend in Prague; but the doctor, who was more versed in mathematics than in chemistry, was as ignorant as his pupil, and it was in vain that they experimented. No success ensued until, it is said, that they actually invoked the spirits of the infernal regions to their aid; but, if so,—which is extremely improbable—the demons were deaf to the invocations of the zealous alchemists.

Finding success impossible, and too carefully guarded to make his escape, Kelly was, in his despair, led to kill his guardian—one George Hunkeer. He was in consequence put in chains, and removed to the Château de Zerner. Here he penned a treatise in Latin on the Philosopher's Stone, which he transmitted to the Emperor on the 14th of October, 1596. With it he also sent a

letter in which he complained bitterly that 'a Marshal of Bohemia should, for a second time, be detained in a prison of Bohemia. But no attention was paid to his remonstrances, nor to his promises of revealing the secret, if he was set at liberty. It was deemed wise that he should not go again through a comedy which had concluded in an assassination.

Luckily for the prisoner, Dr. Dee had succeeded in interesting Queen Elizabeth in his behalf. She put in a claim for him as for one of her subjects, which, however, was disregarded. Another version has it that Dr. Dee wished Kelly to return to England when he was at liberty; but the latter, fearing the consequences, refused to do so; and another, again, and the most likely, is that the parties quarrelled.

What is certain is, that Dr. Dee returned alone to England, in 1598, where he lived and died in peace, although in his last years he was deprived by James I. of the little pension granted to him by the kindness and compassion of Queen Elizabeth.

As to Kelly, he had still some believers who held by him, or some whom he could reduce by his promises, for an attempt was made to rescue him from prison by means of a rope ladder; but this unfortunately broke, and the alchemist tumbled down and broke his leg. His cries gave the alarm, he was incarcerated, and died from the results of his fall, in 1597. He was only forty-two years of age. A certain Mardochée de Delle celebrated the tragical end of this adventurer in verses which testify to the Emperor's belief in the hermetic science of Kelly. The "Treatise on the Philosopher's Stone," which he sent to the Emperor, in 1596, has also been printed in Elias Ashmole's "*Theatrum Britannicum Chemicum*," London, 1652. The said Ashmole was further in possession of a curious journal, in which the experiments made by Dr. Dee and his friend in search of the philosopher's stone were recorded, and these were published by Méric Casaubon, long time after the death of Dr. Dee, which took place in 1604.

There is a great deal in this partly legendary narrative—in which Kelly is written throughout Kelley—that is very contradictory. It is impossible that Kelley can have had to depend upon the powder found in the ivory balls for the reproduction of all the gold which he distributed among his dupes. Like all metals capable of acidification by combination with oxygen, gold and silver can be made to produce very different appearances, as deut-oxides or peroxides, or as hydro-chlorates. The so-called Purple of Cassius used for colouring porcelain in rose and violet is an hydro-chlorate of gold and tin. Porcelain is gilded by the same, precipitated with sulphate of iron. Berzelius obtained a neutral hydro-chlorate, which gives a splendid ruby colour. Fulminating

gold is a yellow hydro-chlorate precipitated by ammonia. Such preparations, whether red, brown, or yellow, can be brought back again to the metallic state by chemical action, more especially by being taken up by quicksilver, and then evaporated. Kelly's great experiment bears evidence, as detailed with exaggerations, that he was acquainted with this fact. It is most likely that Dr. Dee and Kelly were wanting in funds, so as not to be able to convert a pound of gold into a sham philosopher's stone or powder, when they would have been well repaid by the Emperor. Their want of success may also have been due to a careful watch kept over their proceedings, and it is not at all unlikely that this close surveillance, by preventing Kelly's success, so exasperated him as to have led to murder.

ZULULAND.

THE war in Zululand, although its truculent king, Ketchwayo, has been long looked upon at the Cape as the overshadowing danger to the peace, consolidation and good government of our colonies, has come upon many as a surprise, and there have not been wanting some to denounce it as uncalled for and unjust. The clear and able memorandum issued from Pietermaritzburg, by Sir Bartle Frere as high commissioner, has even failed to convince such persons. Attempts have also been made to relieve the Home Government from responsibility by throwing the blame upon Sir Bartle Frere; but it is certain that its members will repudiate all such attempts, as unworthy of a high-spirited ministry. Sir Bartle Frere is not only an intellectual gentleman, but he is also a pious philanthropist, and it is well-known from his antecedents that no man was more averse to shedding blood than he. In the words of the Rev. H. Waller: "The name of Sir Bartle Frere was a guarantee that energy, wisdom, and understanding would be shown to the utmost. Let those hide their faces in shame who had dared to bespatter his name with an unmerciful epithet. Persuasion had been tried upon Cetywayo (or Ketchwayo) in vain, and were we to say "He must do as he likes?" The whole gist of the question lay in these last few words. Were we to submit to the existence of an arrogant and menacing military despotism fatal to the peace and security of the border land? Were we to submit to claims formally put forward to countries which have now for many years been under another sovereignty? Were we to assist and abet the savage king in his wars of aggression? Were we to stand by and look unconcerned upon the massacre of missionaries, the burning of farms, the driving away of cattle, and the murder of the white colonists?

Well might Sir Bartle say, in conclusion of his memorandum: "The Government has done its best to avoid war by every means consistent with honour, and now feels bound to use the power with which it has been entrusted to secure the future peace and safety alike of her Majesty's dominions in South Africa, and of the Zulus, and all other neighbouring tribes and people."

Mr. John Noble, Clerk of the House of Assembly of the Cape Colony, has so briefly and tersely laid the whole question of the position of the Colony, in regard to the natives, before the Colonial Institute that we should have very much liked to have quoted the whole of his paper, so as to make our readers masters of the subject. We are obliged, however to limit ourselves to that portion which refers to the Zulus.

Turning to the period when Natal was proclaimed a British colony in 1843, and observing that as soon as it became a British possession, thousands of Zulus poured into it, seeking refuge from the tyranny of the Zulu chief, increasing and multiplying, until now they number about 300,000, Mr. Noble said that the colonists of Natal had some assurance for the good behaviour of the native population in their midst from the circumstance of their being refugees, who at least valued the security of life and property they enjoyed as compared with their country across the frontier in Zululand; but that yearly the condition of affairs in that adjacent territory itself was becoming more and more alarming. Mr. Noble thus concluded—"It is unnecessary for me to occupy your time with a narrative of more recent events which have led to the breaking of the war cloud over Zululand. To Natal, Cetywayo, with his population of 300,000 or 400,000, and his military kraals containing no less than an army of 40,000, has been for a long time past a looming shadow of ever-impending danger. One boundary line of the Zulu chiefs, from the Tugela river, was only 60 miles from Durban, and 70 miles from Maritzburg, the capital of Natal. To the Transvaal he was likewise a constant menace. No one could tell when or where his warriors, eager to flesh their spears, would burst forth. Even on the frontier of Cape Colony Cetywayo's influence was felt, for he had sent his emissaries to the Pondos just as he was known to have sent them to Secocoeni at the time of the outbreak of the Galeka insurrection. The Hon. Mr. Brownlee, late Secretary for Native Affairs in the Colony, than whom no man in South Africa is better acquainted with native matters, reported to Sir Bartle Frere in November of 1877 that the overtures of Cetywayo were well known to the Galekas and Gaikas, and in taking up arms they calculated upon assistance from him, even to the last believing that that help would come. "Krili and Cetywayo," said Mr. Brownlee, in May, 1878, "may

be regarded as the mainspring of our troubles; their positions and power give weight to anything they may suggest or wish to undertake. Krili's power is now closing, the main source of trouble on this side is thus removed. Judging from the analogy of the past of the natives, whatever may be done to stave off a collision with Cetywayo I think will fail, and that before long the collision will inevitably arise; and when the Zulus, like the Galekas, are broken up, we may look forward to the cessation of wars and combinations of native tribes against the Government. These were prophetic words. With the barbaric power of such a ferocious savage as Cetywayo in close juxtaposition, and his restless warriors ever occasioning ferment and alarm, the peaceful neighbouring tribes were forced to be continually on the alert—in fact, in what European diplomatists would term an armed state of observation. Colonisation, progress, and civilisation could not long exist under such a state of things; and her Majesty's High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, charged with the solemn trust of protecting her Majesty's subjects, had no alternative but to use the power placed at his disposal to secure the safety and future peace of her Majesty's dominions in South Africa, as well as of the Zulus and all the other neighbouring tribes and people. The ordeal through which the country is now passing is a painful one, but it will be productive of blessing to the tribes and people of South Africa, if it teaches Great Britain to profit by the lesson which each Kaffir outbreak should have brought home to us, that we cannot live in immediate vicinity with any race or portion of our fellow-men, whether civilised or uncivilised, neglecting and ignoring our duties towards them, without suffering those evils which form the fitting punishment of our neglect and indifference. If we leave the aboriginal races, within and beyond our borders, in ignorant barbarism, forming communities of savage tyrants and slaves, we are strengthening powers of evil which will again and again reproduce themselves. But if we are true to the position and the privileges which Providence has assigned us in giving us such rich possessions on the threshold of Africa, we have before us the glorious destiny of working towards the regeneration of a whole quarter of the globe, of extending the domain of freedom and the boundaries of Christian civilisation into the interior of the Dark Continent."

The confederation of the South African Colonies would, it is to be observed, by establishing a uniform system of control, not only affect the importation of warlike supplies to the natives, but would materially assist in carrying out this most desirable object. As matters stand at present, however, it is quite clear that, unless we are to leave South Africa altogether, we must decide whether

the white man or black man is to have the supremacy in that part of the world. We are in the same position there that we once were in India, and that the French were, not many years back, in Algeria. Sir Bartle Frere may be blamed by some for being precipitate, and having raised the question without adequate forces, or when it might have been postponed. But it is very questionable if he is to blame for not being adequately supported; and, as to being precipitate, it is very evident, from all the circumstances, that the war was forced upon him, utterly against his own will. Postponement at such a crisis merely means strengthening the hands of the enemy, and maturing dissaffection throughout all those colonies where the black element predominates. Be this as it may, however, this question, which must have been raised sooner or later, has been now brought to the ancient, if painful, arbitrement of the sword, and it must be decided once for all.

AFGHANISTAN.

OUR Government has distinctly proclaimed that what we want is an independent and self-governing Afghanistan. It is, on the other hand, Mr. Gladstone's persuasion that the best barrier against Russian encroachments on that country is not the rectification of our frontier, but "the establishment of local liberties, that men will value and fight for, and not willingly surrender to any Power." It is much to be feared that the local ideas of liberty entertained by the Afghans, and especially by some of the border tribes, resemble very much some such as are expounded by the celebrated Stuart Mill, and verge upon license rather than liberty, in as much as they particularly include the liberty to raise undefined tolls, or to plunder and murder. As to non-rectification of frontier, it is to be hoped wiser councils will prevail; for rivers, like the Rhine, have never proved to be sound frontiers, whilst mountains, as in the case of the Pyrenees, have so. The policy, in fact, advocated by Government is wise and practical; that dreamt of by Mr. Gladstone is unwise and unpractical—purely poetical.

"What local liberties?" it has been asked in the *Pioneer Mail*, "would Afghans value and fight for; the privilege of electing municipalities, or the license to cut each other's throats and rob all strangers?" But Mr. Gladstone would be right enough if he said that rectification of our frontier is only the beginning, and not the end, of our renewed relations with Afghanistan. The difficulties of our last connection began with the success of our military operations; and the same will be the case now. And our frontier rectified, it will not be impossible to foster and develop certain in-

terests in the country, to our advantage, as well as to the well-being of the Afghans themselves. In Lord Mayo's time a scheme was drawn up for the benefit of the Lohani traders, the men who bring their wares from Central Asia to every corner of India. So also of the Afghan traders and fruit-dealers, and the people generally. Trade can be protected; the safety of the passes ensured; and in this, as in many other ways, interests will be developed which may have a permanently beneficial effect upon the Afghan's national character.

The fears and apprehensions entertained by some as to the future of Afghanistan, and the upshot of our relations with that country, have little foundation. In as far as the war has as yet gone, we have only had to do with the border tribes, and with the Ghilzais and other tribes, many of whom—and notoriously the Ghilzais—were in open hostility at Kabûl. That the Afghans will be able to establish some kind of government of their own, without the connivance of either India or Russia there can be little doubt; and if not, it will be their own fault, for past experience has shown that it is the most impolitic thing for any foreign power to interfere with the internal and dynastic squabbles of the turbulent Afghans. Once the passes in our possession, and the country of the Ghilzais held by strengthening the existing fortified positions, nothing will remain for Afghanistan proper than to establish under the ægis of India that independent and self-governing rule which is most agreeable to their genius, and best fitted for the tranquillity and prosperity of the country; while all that our Government seeks for is to rectify for ever our previous insufficient and unsatisfactory frontier against Russian encroachments and the caprices of a treacherous sovereign and ally.

OUR "VIRTUOUS" POOR.

It is a well-known and oft-quoted adage that "one half of the world do not know how the other half lives;" and this has been strikingly exemplified in a discussion which recently took place in the Haddington Presbytery of the Established Church of Scotland, and which has given rise to the ventilation of the question of how to meet the claims which the virtuous poor have on society generally.

The discussion was originated by the Rev. Dr. Whitelaw, of Athelstaneford, a man of large-hearted benevolence and warm sympathies, one of the ablest men in the Church of Scotland; and since then Lord Hatherley, Professor Legge, of Oxford, Mr. John Bright, and others, have, by published letters and otherwise, expressed their views on the question. All the letters have been

addressed to Dr. Whitelaw, who, as Professor Legge says, has thrown himself into the subject; and both in the Scotch and English papers the matter has been referred to at greater or less length.

The question raised by Dr. Whitelaw is the condition of the virtuous poor—those who have become poor in consequence of causes over which they have little or no control, such as old age, disease, hereditary or acquired, depression of trade, reverse of fortune, successive bereavements, or the imprudence, intemperance, or folly of some of the family, dragging down the parents with them into a condition of helpless pecuniary embarrassment.

The importance of the question may be judged by the fact that Dr. Whitelaw estimates this class of the population at twenty out of every hundred, so that not only in the sister country of Scotland, but in our own, there are many thousands of men and women who have become poor through no fault of their own, and who are receiving the same stinted allowance as those whose poverty has been caused by intemperance and vice. It is manifestly desirable that something should be done for this deserving class of the population, and in coming forward as their champion, Dr. Whitelaw is in an eminent degree carrying out earnest and practical Christianity. For the stand he has taken he is entitled to the thanks of all, especially the thinking portion of the community.

The problem which the reverend doctor has set himself to solve is one of the most interesting that can engage the attention of the philanthropist and the Christian; and those two qualities blend in an eminent degree in the character of this distinguished Scottish clergyman. We may hope, therefore, that the light which has been thrown on the question, not only by Dr. Whitelaw, but by such men as Lord Hatherley and Mr. Bright, will ere long enable some practical conclusion to be arrived at.

The remedies which have as yet been suggested for the evil complained of are, it is to be feared, in some cases crude, in others impracticable. Mr. Bright thinks that if land were not made, as he thinks it is, a "virtual monopoly" in the United Kingdom, and especially in Scotland, and if the population were not "divorced from the soil" that there would be less of this kind of poverty. It is impossible not to see in this the expression of a master notion, which is made to apply to every grievance till it almost "masters" the intellect of an otherwise philosophical philanthropist. No doubt, as it has been justly remarked, a measure of relief would follow if the honourable gentleman's ideas about land were carried out (although the condition of the French peasantry under the system of an unlimited parcelling out of land is by no means favourable to its universal adoption); even then the relief would be local,

not general. "In the beginning" the occupation of man was to till the ground; but the development of the arts and sciences, not less than the multiplication of the human race, has rendered agriculture or husbandry as a sole occupation an impossibility. Would Mr. Bright have us return to a state of things as it was "in the beginning?"

Nor does Mr. Bright approach nearer to a solution of the question when he says: "The public exactions and expenditure have much to do with poverty. To raise not less than eighty millions sterling per annum for purposes of Government, to expend thirty millions of it in military preparations and means of offence and defence, the bulk of which is only rendered apparently necessary by a mistaken foreign policy, must act as a burden upon the people, and especially on the humbler class of the people, and must press multitudes of prudent and virtuous families to poverty."

The fact is, the existence of a military and naval force is not the seeking of the country or of its rulers—it is forced upon us by the attitude assumed by others. Nor is the bulk of such a force rendered necessary by a mistaken foreign policy. Great Britain and Ireland owe their existence to foreign commerce, without which even home industry would be of no avail, and that commerce cannot be maintained save by adequate protection by land and by sea. It is simply to maintain freedom of commerce that most wars are brought about, save when the ambitious and the uncivilised impel to defensive acts. There would be even far more poverty than there is at present, were an island to supersede an imperial policy, and Great Britain were to forego colonial and other settlements, and freedom of commerce. Add to this, it is well known that even with these demands upon us—lamentable, yet unavoidable as they are—government taxation does not press upon the poor—with many not a tenth, but with some, perhaps, one-eighth—directly and indirectly, as much as local taxation.

The "whisky question," too, as Mr. Bright terms it, has unquestionably much to do with the causes of poverty; but here, again, it has been justly remarked: if every clergyman in England, Scotland and Ireland, were, as the honourable gentleman puts it, "to banish whisky from their houses, and the consumption of it from their customs or social habits," there still would be virtuous poor to be looked after and relieved. On the whole, Mr. Bright's remedies must be looked on as of rather a negative character than otherwise; though, as a contribution to the discussion of the question, his remarks are very valuable.

Lord Hatherley, on the other hand, thinks that, so far as relief is concerned, "a shilling not earned is mischievously bestowed," and he does not see see his way to helping this class of people effectually

"by any method so likely to succeed as teaching them to help themselves." This, he thinks, can be done by some such principles as that on which the Parochial Mission Woman's Association is founded—that principle being the receiving by the agent of the association from the poor "whatever they can save in order to pay for useful, clothing, &c." There, again, the remedial measure is, as has been pointed out, at fault, for the "virtuous" poor, in the strict sense of the term, need no such inducements as the visits of any mission women to receive money from them in order to pay for useful articles; they can lay out the money they have quite as well as any hired or voluntary functionary could do it for them.

Dr. Legge's remedies may be summed up in a few words. He fully agrees with Mr. Bright as to the monstrous misfortune of such large sums of money being expended on military and naval efficiency as are necessitated by the action of other powers and peoples; and he further thinks, which is more to the point, that clergymen and leading members of the churches might do much by commending, especially to the young, the habit of saving and laying by, and accumulating a capital, however small. He also suggests the extension of the Charity Organisation Society throughout all Great Britain, and committees of it in every town and parish, so that no really deserving or necessitous poor should be unattended to. His letter to Dr. Whitelaw concludes thus:—"You have thrown yourself into the subject. Do not let it drop. Mature and fully develop your views, and bring them before the next Social Science Congress."

This is also the object of any remarks we have made on the subject, to encourage Dr. Whitelaw to persevere in the good cause he has taken up, and not to rest satisfied until a remedy is applied to the evils the existence of which he ably demonstrated. The reverend gentleman's own idea seems to be that each congregation should take care of its own poor, and that stated collections should be made for them so as to double the sum they receive from the guardians. No doubt this would establish a wholesome difference, and the deserving poor would, at least, meet with better treatment than the undeserving. But on this point it has also been remarked this would not meet the case of all. No doubt, it would very much diminish the sufferings of this class of the community who are connected with different congregations, but it would not apply to those beyond their, or without their, communion. It is certain, however that, if the different congregations were trained to look after their virtuous poor, a commencement would be made in a sense of remedial measures which would have the effect of alleviating a mass of suffering which is none the less poignant because it is borne in often uncomplaining silence. The question, as it has

been said, is one of the deepest importance, and if Dr. Whitelaw shall succeed in thoroughly arousing public attention to this important matter, it will be one of the crowning acts of a long and useful life spent in the service of his Great Master, and in the great cause of doing good to his fellow-men.

FIRST CONGRESSES OF BRITISH ARCHÆOLOGISTS.

THE death of Mr. A. J. Dunkin, of Dartford, antiquarian and historian, has just given an opportunity to the veteran archæologist, Mr. Charles Roach Smith, to place on record that Mr. Dunkin, in addition to his extensive and laborious historical inquiries and antiquarian researches, and his numerous contributions towards the history of Kent, was one of the earliest and most active members of the Congresses of the British Archæological Association at Canterbury and Worcester—congresses which are now ramified throughout the entire length and breadth of the land.

The death of Mr. Dunkin, Mr. C. R. Smith remarks, reduces the list of the few survivors of the staff of these the first Congresses ever held in Great Britain, already thinned by the death of its chairman, Lord Albert Conyngham, Mr. Thomas Wright, Dr. Buckland, Dr. Pettigrew, Mr. Crofton Croker, Mr. Fairholt, and others, to a list easily told—The Messrs. Ainsworth (William Harrison and William Francis, F.S.A.), Mr. Halliwell-Phillips, Mr. Joseph Clarke, Messrs. John and Cecil Brent, Mr. Dillon Croker, Mr. G. Godwin, Mr. Alfred White, Mr. Taylor, F.R.S., and Mr. Charles Roach Smith, F.S.A., "the Founder."

When it was decided by the Committee not to print the proceedings of the first Congresses, Mr. Dunkin, in the hearty goodwill, and with that liberal spirit which formed so prominent a feature in his character, at once, single-handed, undertook and accomplished the arduous self imposed labour.

The deceased antiquarian, in addition to his printed materials towards the history of Kent, which Mr. Smith recommends to the collectors of the *Bibliotheca Cantiana*, leaves a very valuable and unique collection of writings and engravings, besides some 20 large volumes full of bronze rubbings, engravings, and most curious and important information, arranged with admirable system by Miss Dunkin, who, with her brother, has made these matters the labour of life. The collection of Roman coins, and of stone and bone implements of pre-historic periods, is, we understand, to go to the Guildhall Museum of London.

RETROSPECTION.

'Tis a sweet but a sad recollection
Of a blossom that bloomed long ago,
That autumn winds killed long ago:
Of a luscious and fabled affection
That youth—burning youth—may bestow,
That only life's spring may bestow:
A May-born erotic connection
That age—drooping age—cannot know;
An omnipotent glorious connection
Adolescence and strength only know!

I remember, the night winds were sleeping!
Scarce an audible sound could be heard,
Only lover-loved sounds could be heard;
For the flowers were mournfully weeping
Overcome by the plaint of a bird,
By the musical sighs of a bird:
And a far fountain's murmur came creeping,
Came faint as a dying man's word:
Came fitfully, fearfully creeping,
Like the tones of a dying man's word!

It was in a mellifluous bower
Intertwined, intertwined with vine,
With protuberant riches of vine:
That, during night's eloquent hour,
When the music of love is divine,
When the heart's-strings are harp-string's divine;
My belov'd reached a hand for a flower
And lovingly placed it in mine;
Reached a hand for a timorous flower
And placed it, with kisses, in mine!

'Twas the fairest fair flower that grows
In the valleys and alleys of love,
In the manifold gardens of love
'Twas a beautiful opening rose
Softly mellow'd in hue like the dove,
Like the changes we see on the dove;

And it whispered "Our glories are those
That decline like the rainbow's above;
Evanescently radiant as those
That enchant like the rainbow's above!"

Yes! those virgin tints soon, soon departed,
So I carelessly threw it away,
Oh! I ruthlessly flung it away;
But, astonished, my callous heart started
At hearing it mournfully say,
At hearing it plaintively say:
"Like me you may be broken-hearted
When freshness and beauty decay;
You, too, may become broken-hearted
Should love, like a flower, decay!"

Oh! love, could thy heart be renascent,
Relume and relive—as of yore—
Its ineffable raptures of yore;
Then pleasure could not be senescent
Nor thou have a past to deplore,
A far phantom past to deplore;
And my heart could be sleeping quiescent
That now can be tranquil no more,
But that dreams of a joyous quiescent,
Dear past that returneth no more!

CECIL MAXWELL-LYTE.